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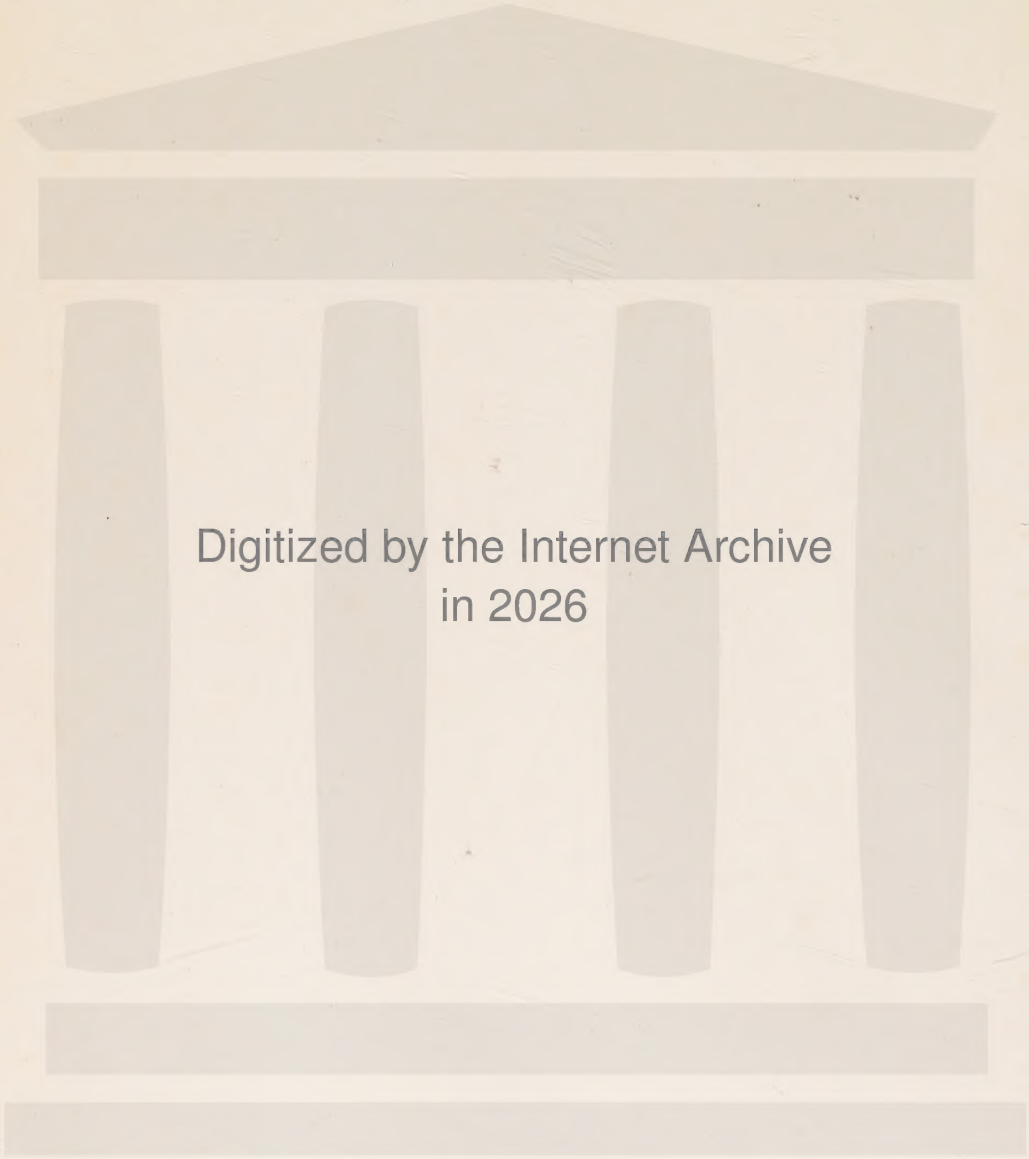
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SMALL COUNTRY HOUSES OF TO-DAY

(SECOND SERIES)

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HILL END, PRESTON, HERTS.—A GARDEN PATH

SMALL COUNTRY HOUSES OF TO-DAY

SECOND SERIES

LAWRENCE WEAVER

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MCMXIX

PREFACE.

ON the exhaustion of the second large edition of *Small Country Houses of To-day,* it seemed wise first to prepare a wholly new volume on the same lines, and to defer the issue of a third edition of the first volume. In the first volume questions of cost, both actual and comparative, were discussed in many of the chapters. The figures then given have become meaningless, because the war has not only changed values, but changed them unevenly. In the following pages I have made few references to cost, and those guarded, because prophecy would give no pleasure to me or help to my readers.

Of the thirty-seven architects whose new houses were illustrated in Volume I, only six appear again. Twenty-eight are represented for the first time, but the work of some of them in the reparation of old fabrics was shown in my intermediate book, *Small Country Houses: Their Repair and Enlargement.*

In Volume I the arrangement of chapters was dictated by the alphabetical order of their designers; but that now seems to me a dull solution. I have grouped my present subjects rather with reference to the traditions which inspired them. The simpler vernacular work comes first, and the changefulness of modern eclecticism is seen through various types and roughly in the historical sequence of their anti-types until the presentation of the later classical tradition is reached. It is the manner of some books on domestic architecture to discuss qualities of design and to illustrate them by buildings which yield apt examples of the writer's theses. I have taken a house rather than an abstract quality as the basis of each chapter, and let its main characteristic suggest a line of thought. The method is discursive, even disjointed, but at least it has the advantage that the reader may skip a chapter without breaking the thread of any argument.

It is permissible to wonder what manner of houses will be illustrated in a book similar to this published twenty years hence. Will the present upheaval of social life make an indelible mark on domestic architecture and change the character of our country houses as it is changing our national policies?

Will the shortage of certain materials and new constructive methods have any marked effect on design? I am inclined to doubt it. Town architecture must be affected towards a more extended communal life, and in country houses the use will grow of every device that will make their owners less dependent on the service of others. In the field of pure design the tendency to rely on classical qualities rather than on picturesqueness is likely to develop rapidly. But a new method of design is incredible, simply because it is not feasible. We had our misfortunes a few years ago in that pursuit, but even before the war the "New Art" which pleased Germany and Austria so vastly was "dead and damned" in Great Britain. It is far more likely that we shall signify our essential sympathy with Latin culture by developing a national school of design inspired by a classical spirit. If its quality is akin to austerity, that will only be in accord with the sacrifices we have made and the burdens we shall long bear.

LAWRENCE WEAVER.

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CHAPTER I.—INTRODUCTORY.

Concerning Client and Architect—Fees and Services—A Recent Change in the R.I.B.A. Scale—Six per cent.—The Value of Models—Examples in Various Materials—Subsoils and Architects' advice thereon—Architects and the Public—The War and House Design.

DURING many years of work as Architectural Editor of *Country Life* I received so many letters from correspondents on the question of architects' fees that it may be useful if my introductory chapter is devoted in the main to some explanations on a matter which seems little understood. The basis of remuneration is set out in a pamphlet on professional practice issued by the Royal Institute of British Architects. It contains many clauses which refer to services in connection with valuation and purchase of property, but these need not here be discussed. Those which concern the practice of domestic architecture may be paraphrased as follows :

The customary remuneration for an architect's labours was, until May, 1919, a commission of five per cent. on the total cost of works executed under his direction. After long deliberations the Royal Institute of British Architects, which is the legislative body in such matters, has laid it down that its members shall in future base their charges on six per cent. This rise is reasonable, when it is remembered how greatly in recent years both the work and the responsibility of the architect have increased. The charge of six per cent. is in respect of works costing £2,000 and upwards. This commission for services rendered includes the preliminary discussions between architect and client, the architect's first sketches, an approximate estimate for the work (such, for example, as may be obtained by taking out the cubical contents of the proposed building), the general and detailed drawings, a specification, general superintendence of the work as it proceeds, and the checking and certifying of the builder's account. In addition, the client pays the architect's travelling and other out-of-pocket expenses incurred in visiting the works, and if their distance from the architect's office is so great as to absorb an unusual amount of time, he is entitled to make a further charge. It would be obviously unreasonable, for example, to expect a London architect to carry out a building in the north of Ireland or in the Orkneys without some additional remuneration to represent the abnormal expenditure of time in travelling. The six per cent., however, does not cover everything. It is usual in the case of all but small buildings to have a bill of quantities prepared and a number of copies of it lithographed for the purpose of obtaining the estimates of the competing builders. This work is generally done by the architect in the Provinces, but in London more frequently by a quantity surveyor, whose charge is two and a half per cent. on the value of the works up to £5,000, and two per cent. on the cost above that amount. This item is usually included in the builder's estimate, and paid to the quantity surveyor by the contractor, because the quantities

are prepared for the purpose of enabling the builder to make his estimate, and therefore form part of its cost. Some clients have the idea that this is an unnecessary expenditure, and that it should be sufficient for the work to be done on the basis of the specification and drawings. Unless, however, the contemplated works are very simple in character and small in extent, the omission of a proper bill of quantities makes an illusive economy which may prove very expensive in the long run. The particular virtues of a bill of quantities are that it establishes a price for every detail of the building, and that it ensures closer and more accurate estimates being submitted by the builders who are competing for the contract. Omissions and additions can therefore be made without any risk that they will be made the occasion for overcharge by the builder.

It should be noted that the architect's six per cent. does not cover (*a*) negotiations which the client may desire the architect to undertake in connection with the purchase of the site, (*b*) a survey of the site, (*c*) the adjusting of differences with neighbouring owners which may lead to litigation or arbitration, (*d*) the labour involved in supplying plans to ground landlords or public authorities. For these and certain other services additional charges may be made according to the amount of time and trouble which they involve, but most architects deal very gently with their clients under these heads. Any reader of this who desires to know very precisely how an architect's charges may be built up should obtain the official scale from the R.I.B.A.

It should be noted that while the architect does his best to see that the work is carried out strictly in accordance with the plans and specifications, he makes no claim to infallibility. Between one visit and another, work may be wrongly executed and he will have no knowledge of this. He therefore stipulates that he is not to be considered as a guarantor for the contractor, who is alone to be held responsible for the proper execution of all the work included in his contract. This is clearly set out in the new R.I.B.A. scale.

For all buildings where constant superintendence is necessary, it is desirable that a clerk of works shall be appointed by the architect on the client's behalf, and his salary is payable by the client. The business of the clerk of the works is to examine and approve all the materials which are provided by the contractor, and to be satisfied that they and the workmanship are strictly in accordance with the contract. It is important that he should be a man in whom the architect has implicit confidence, and over whom he has the fullest control, as no office is more open to bribery and corruption. It should be obvious that it is impossible for an architect who visits the works at discretionary intervals to check personally every detail of the building. Much depends upon the standing of the builder employed; and if he is a person of repute, the character of whose work is well known to the architect, a clerk of works is not always necessary, save for extensive contracts. For works of alteration, however, which may involve serious risks in the course of construction demanding instant and responsible decisions, a competent clerk of works who is always on the spot is almost a necessity.

There are, however, cases in which the general basis of six per cent. on the cost of the work provides an inadequate remuneration for an architect. These

are, in the main, three. For new works costing less than two thousand pounds, for alterations and additions to existing buildings (especially in the case where an old building is being restored to its original state) and for such work as the designing of furniture, fitments, stained glass, etc., six per cent. is rarely sufficient. The labour which the architect has to expend in designing and superintending such work is altogether out of proportion to the money value of the work executed, and six per cent. may not represent a living wage. An architect, therefore, is quite entitled to charge on the basis of the trouble and time involved. For example, for a country cottage costing £800, the fees, at six per cent., would only be £48. Yet it will be a complete structure—a house in miniature—involving nearly the same amount of thought as one costing three times as much.

The above considerations apply to works which proceed in a normal and satisfactory manner from the time that the client gives his instructions to the architect until he is in occupation of the house and the builder's final accounts have been paid. But other situations may arise which it is necessary to consider. We may assume that the client starts out with the intention to build, and that matters proceed as far as the preparation of the plans, elevations, sections and specification for the building, sufficient to enable a tender to be obtained. At this point he may change his mind and abandon the project. In such a case the architect is entitled to charge two-thirds of the fee which would have been due if the building had been carried out, plus the cost of the bill of quantities if the client has sanctioned its preparation. We may also imagine the case of a client who gives instructions for designs to be prepared for a house with garage, stables and a garden scheme. If eventually he builds the house only, and abandons the idea of the stables, etc., the architect is entitled to two-thirds of his full fee on the cost of what is abandoned, as well as six per cent on what is carried out. Sometimes a client thinks of building, and gets a number of preliminary sketches from an architect, but gives up the idea before the architect has gone the length of preparing the complete plans and specification necessary for a contract. In such a case the charges set out above would not apply, and the remuneration for the trouble that the architect has taken is one-fourth of the fee which would have been due if the work had been carried out.

Some architects have always been unwilling to accept a scale of payment which did not in their opinion represent the value of the work they did for their client, and have asked seven and a half or ten per cent. In doing this they sometimes make the increased scale cover such extra items as I have described in paragraphs (*a*) (*b*) (*c*) (*d*) on page 2 relating to new buildings costing more than two thousand pounds, or the increased amount of professional labour (in proportion to the value of the contract) involved in the alteration and enlargement of old buildings, or in the superintendence of wholly new works costing less than two thousand pounds. The one thing desirable is for the client to ascertain exactly what his architect proposes to charge him, and whether such charges are inclusive or liable to be increased in certain eventualities.

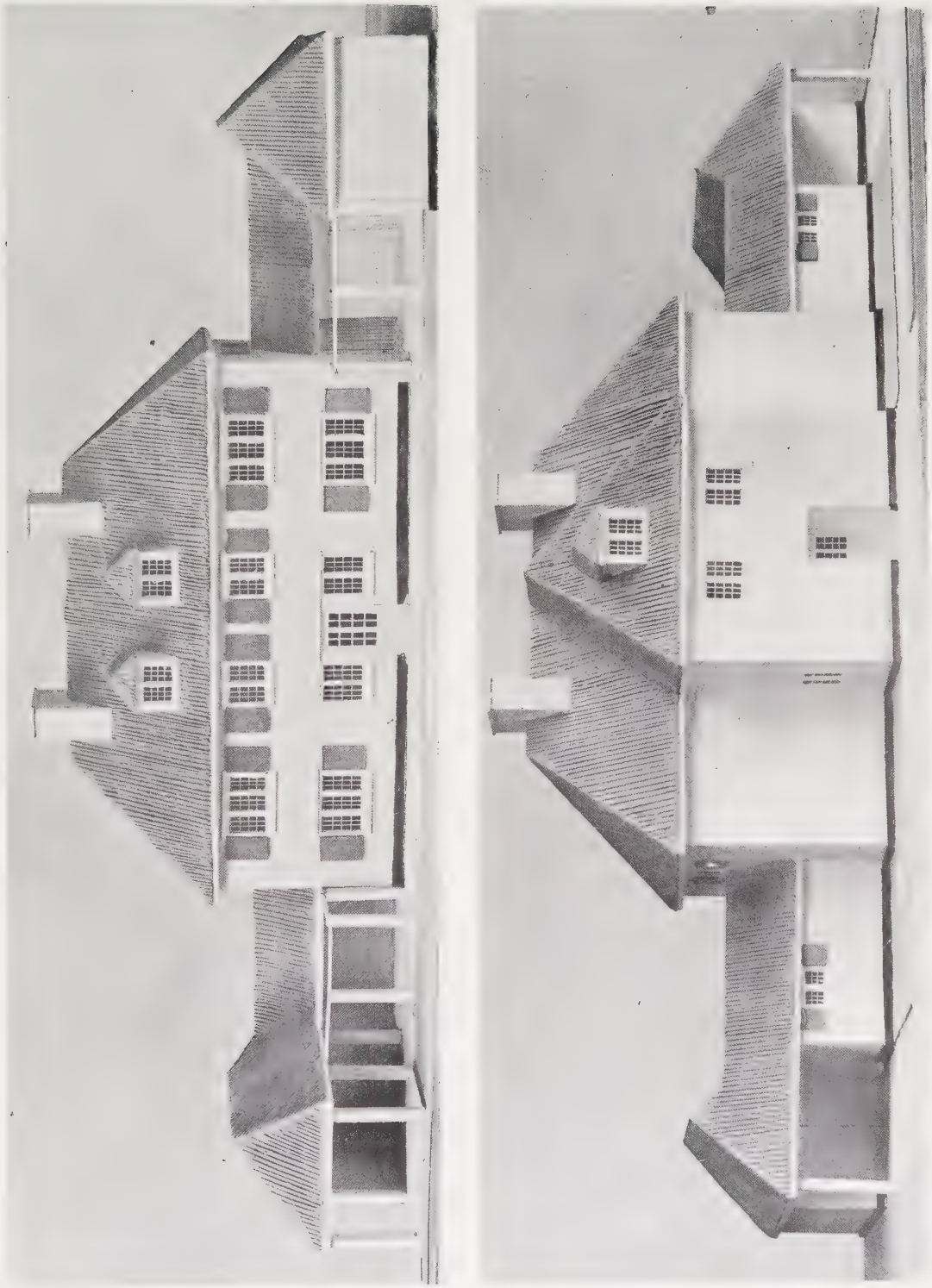
I have known several cases where nothing was said either by client or architect when the instructions were given, either through carelessness on the client's side or an assumption by the architect that everyone ought to know that the R.I.B.A.

scale of charges existed. In the result discomfort and conflict ensued, in which the architect appealed successfully to the R.I.B.A. scale as the standard of professional charges, but the client was left with a feeling of soreness. If I had written this in 1918 the basis percentage would have been five per cent., and other figures also would have been different. I could then have described them as the "customary remuneration" of architects, but that would not be true of the 1919 scale. It will take time, and probably the rough surgery of the Law Courts, to drive it into clients' minds that architects' fees, like everything else, are "up." A straightforward discussion of the whole matter, followed by an exchange of letters defining what has been agreed, before any work is begun by the architect, is the best way to avoid subsequent troubles.

So far my notes have had reference to an architect's work, which may or may not have reached its logical conclusion in the erection of a building, but nevertheless represented the carrying out of the specific instructions of his client.

There remains the question—and it is a very difficult question—as to what happens if the client does not know his or her mind? The cases are all too frequent of people who decide to build, let us say, a house costing two thousand pounds. When, after full consultation, the plans have been prepared, and have been approved by the client, he will, perhaps, decide to add a billiard-room or two extra bedrooms. The result, probably quite unexpected by the client, will be that the whole scheme of the house needs to be recast, involving not only an entirely new set of plans, but also all the thought which has to be given to the solution of the problem before ever pencil is put to paper. Architects are, in fact, often called upon to design for one site two or three houses instead of one. Being, on the whole, long-suffering and patient people, they very often do it without speaking of extra remuneration. It is obvious, nevertheless, that they are in equity entitled to be paid something extra for doing their work twice over after the first doing of it has been approved, and a just client will take a liberal view of the case should the architect ask for some extra fees to cover his extra labours. It is worth while to point out what people expect of the architect. As Mr. Filson Young once wrote, "We demand from him the imagination of an artist, the precision of an engineer, and the commercial acumen of a cotton broker. He is expected to be poetical about gables and practical about drain-pipes." At the same time he has to be an economical administrator and organiser, a confidential and disinterested adviser, and of an integrity above all suspicion. This desirable combination of qualities was hardly likely to be ensured while the profession was kept down to the starvation line. What architecture owes to the enthusiastic victims who practised it before the war is unknown outside the profession itself. With the increase of the basis from five to six per cent., and having regard to the fact that the percentage is now payable on building costs which have at least doubled since the war, the architect is now for the first time on a level with the other professions in the matter of remuneration. Sir Christopher Wren received five per cent. on the cost of the City churches, and a rise in the scale was overdue.

I hope that the foregoing notes will do something to clear away the fog of ignorance which is in danger of clouding the financial relations between architect and client, but there are other points which it may be helpful to discuss.



1 and 2.—TWO VIEWS OF MODEL, MADE BY LIONEL F. CRANE.
Architect, C. F. W. Dening.

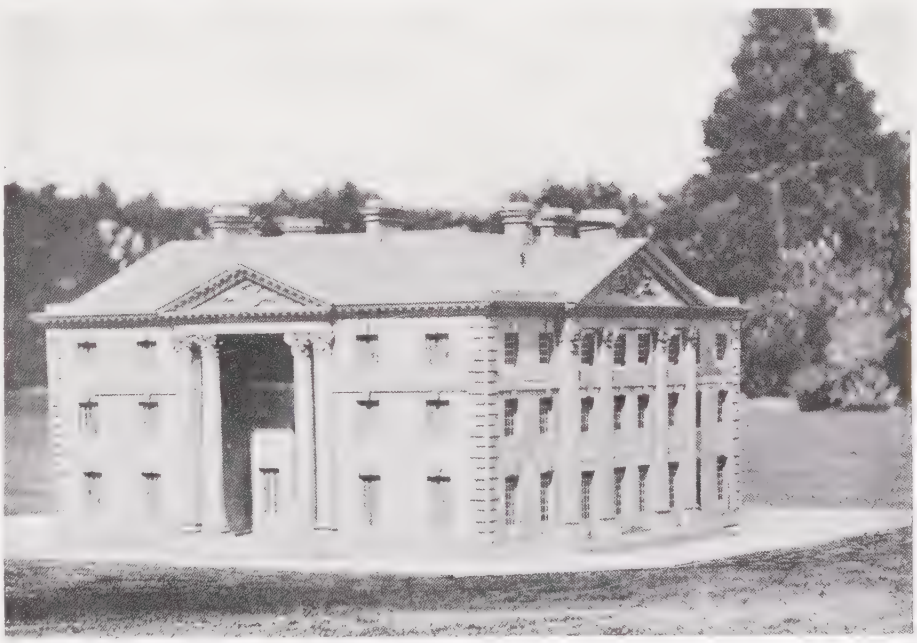
Many of the misunderstandings that arise between architect and client are due to the latter's inability to "read" drawings, *i.e.*, to get a mental picture of what will be the appearance "in the round" of what is represented flat on the architect's drawings. Models are a great safeguard against the failure of the client to understand what is very clear to the architect's practised eye. Their use is no new thing.

In the Museum at Rouen there is a carton model of the church of Saint-Maclou, which has been claimed as dating from about 1414. This early attribution cannot be substantiated, and the model is more probably of 1680. There is documentary evidence, however, which, though it is not decisive, points to the possibility of models of churches having been made in Northern Europe during the Middle Ages. Italian architects were early alive to their value. A model was made of part of Orvieto Cathedral. Bramante is said to have prepared one of his first designs for St. Peter's. Brunelleschi's Pitti Palace was also first built "in little," and Michelangelo experimented on the dome of St. Peter's in like fashion.

3.—MODEL OF HOUSE AND HILLSIDE, BY JOHN THORP.

When we come to England in the seventeenth century there is the very substantial model made, by Royal command, of Wren's first (and rejected) scheme for St. Paul's. It is still preserved at the Cathedral. It is fair to say that in 1675, after his second design was accepted by King Charles's warrant, Wren "resolved to make no more Models, or publickly expose his Drawings, which (as he had found by Experience) did but lose Time, and subjected his Business many Times, to incompetent Judges." The conditions of public works are, however, markedly different from those of domestic architecture, and we can well understand how Sir Christopher chafed under ignorant criticism. That, however, was more liable to be produced by misunderstanding of drawings than of models, and Wren's determination of future secrecy covered both. Late in the eighteenth century people of taste began to give serious attention to the possibilities of small domestic architecture. Early in the nineteenth century printers were busy producing a crop of books on the

small country houses of that day. They were mostly written by architects who wanted to advertise themselves. Even serious practitioners like Joseph Gandy, A.R.A., exposed their wares in slim quartos, which are very entertaining not only for their pompous diction, but for the queer designs which they commended to the nobility and gentry. Among them was one Richard Elsam, now notable for nothing save a splendid conflict with a district surveyor over the building by-laws of that day. He wrote, however, some wise words on the subject of models in his "Essay on Rural Architecture." After pointing out that perspective drawing is an important equipment, he says: "but however useful it may be to architects as practical men, there are but few persons that comprehends" (the grammar is Elsam's) "every part of a building



4 and 5.—TWO VIEWS OF MODEL OF GATE BURTON HALL, MADE IN STUDIO OF DETMAR BLOW AND FERDINAND BILLEREY, ARCHITECTS OF THE HOUSE.

6.—ROUGH PAPER MODEL OF HOUSE.
P. Morley Horder, Architect.

7.—MODEL OF COTSWOLD COTTAGES.
Design and Model by Lionel F. Crane.

from a drawing in perspective so well as in a Model: I would, therefore, by preference, recommend one or two of these expensive toys to the consideration of gentlemen, rather than beguile their understandings with captivating and delusive drawings."

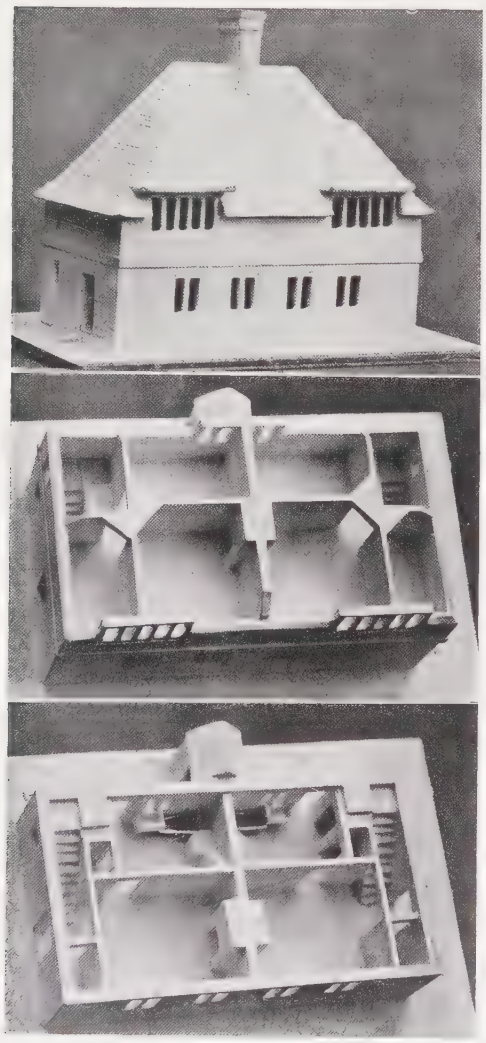
So much by way of historical justification for the making of models of projected buildings. We may now consider how far this practice may be usefully followed in

the case of small country houses. The question needs to be explored from the point of view both of the architect and the building owner. It may be assumed that the former is so fully acquainted with the relation between his drawings and the appearance of the building to be erected from them, that for him, at least, a model is in no wise an essential part of the necessary process of translating ideas into bricks and mortar. With the client it is far otherwise. Perspective views are to some extent helpful by way of elucidating them, but they are apt to be misleading. The artistic zeal of the draughtsman will sometimes invest a very ordinary building with a charm which the executed work is not likely to reveal. A subtle use of colour and of exaggerated shadows, a setting of the house against a background of imaginary landscape or in the midst of a garden which it would take a century to mature are devices common and excusable enough, but none the less tending to mislead. The pictorial quality of the drawing overwhelms the appreciation of the bare facts of the building which it is intended to portray. Even the best perspective, moreover, only shows one point of view and that, naturally enough, the best. A view taken from the south side, for example, may indicate a delightfully balanced group of gables and chimneys which from the east gives an impression of mere disorder.

The value of a model is that the scheme of the building may be appreciated from every point of view. It appears in the solid instead of in the flat. Bays and porches reveal their true projections, and the client is able to form a concrete idea of what seems unduly abstract on paper. I therefore reproduce photographs of models of various types. Figs. 1 and 2 show the north and south fronts of a cottage which won the first prize in a COUNTRY LIFE Competition. This model was not based exactly on the competition drawings, but shows a rather larger variation of the scheme. Mr. Dening's design was delightfully interpreted in the model by Mr. Lionel Crane, who was all the better equipped for this work as he is himself a practising architect. This model was made to the scale of a quarter of an inch to the foot, which is ample for the purpose, but does not allow small details to be elaborated.

Mr. John Thorp is well known as a model maker by his fine historical models of Old London, some of which have found an appropriate resting-place in the London Museum. One of his house models is illustrated in Fig. 3, and is of special interest because it shows not only the house, but also the treatment of a remarkable hillside site, and the disposition of the terrace retaining walls, stairways and seats. The model of Gate Burton Hall, Lincolnshire (Figs. 4 and 5), a house designed by Messrs. Detmar Blow and Fernand Billerey, was made in the architects' studio to the scale of a quarter of an inch to the foot. It has a great air of verisimilitude in the pictures because it was photographed in the open air against a background of trees, and, as the house is a large one, the model covers a big area. Of much more modest dimensions, and made in less solid fashion of little else but paper, is the little model (to the scale of only one-sixteenth of an inch to the foot) of a house built in the south of Ireland to the designs of Mr. P. Morley Horder (Fig. 6). This was made quite roughly and quickly in the architect's office to explain the plans of a rather irregular house. This purpose it served admirably, for, although it shows no detail, it indicates the mass and grouping of the building as well as an elaborate model would have done. It should be added that its frail construction had suffered

much battering from handling and travel before it was photographed. Models may be of all sorts of materials from paper up to solid plaster carved with all the skill of a sculptor after casting from an original clay model. Plasticine is a convenient material for indicating pantiled roofs. The construction of models for the purpose of giving a fair idea of the design for a house should not be unduly fine and detailed. They should not be finished with that extremely fine regard for detail which is appropriate in an engineering model or one prepared for use in a Law Court. Mr. Crane's model, shown in Fig. 7, won the first prize among the many models which accompanied designs submitted in the COUNTRY LIFE National Cottage Competition. It stood out markedly from the rest by the satisfactory way in which the texture and colour of the stone walls and roof were represented. It was to the scale of one quarter of an inch to a foot, which is, on the whole, the best scale for the models of cottages and small houses. Most model makers use cardboard built up on an internal wood frame for the sake of rigidity, and some touch up their surfaces with gesso.



8.—MODEL AND PLAN OF PAIR OF COTTAGES, MADE IN THREE PIECES TO SHOW PLANS OF ROOMS

Architect, M. Maberly Smith.
(The bottom photograph shows the ground floor, and the middle one the bedroom floor.)

Some models are ambitiously constructed to take to pieces and thus to show the planning of the rooms on both floors. Fig. 8 shows a delightful little one of this sort made by Mr. Maberly Smith. But, for ordinary purposes, this refinement is an extravagance. Richard Elsam has been quoted as describing house models as "expensive toys," and so they may be if built to a large scale and with much detail shown in miniature. Such slight models as that of the Irish house (Fig. 6) cost only a few pounds, and, even if made to larger scale and in a more finished manner, the expenditure need not be more than a ten-pound note. A good many clients will think it wiser to incur even an expenditure of twenty or thirty pounds rather than embark on building with the uneasy feeling that they have not taken from the drawings any real conception of what their house will look like when built. It should be understood, of course, that it is no part of an architect's duty to include the provision of a model

without being reimbursed either for the charges he may be put to if he orders it from an independent model maker, or for the time expended by one of his own assistants who may have a gift for such work. The cost of models naturally depends not only on size, but also on the complexity of the design which is interpreted. A large but simple Georgian house with four flat elevations and a plain hipped roof is naturally a cheaper

9.—MODEL OF YORKSHIRE COTTAGES.

10.—MODEL OF SUFFOLK COTTAGES, PHOTOGRAPHED AGAINST NATURAL BACKGROUND.

thing to portray by model than a much smaller house with an irregular plan and a greatly broken roof-line.

A further value may be given to a model and its verisimilitude much enhanced by having it photographed amid "natural" surroundings. Mr. Allen Chandler has an amazing skill in this work. Figs. 9, 10, and 11 show a series of models by

various makers, photographed after Mr. Chandler had provided them with appropriate backgrounds made of all sorts of queer improvised materials.

In the Introduction to the first volume of this series I set down the nine points of the law of site-choosing, the first of which dealt with soils. This matter is one on which the architect's advice is needed before any question of making plans arises, and clients often forget or do not know it. It may, therefore, be helpful to show the sort of considerations on which professional advice is needed at the first stage of the building idea.

It is supposed that clay is necessarily damp and undesirable, and that chalk and gravel are alone satisfactory. The subject cannot be dismissed so summarily.

11.—MODEL OF COTSWOLD COTTAGES, PHOTOGRAPHED AGAINST NATURAL BACKGROUND.

In some cases clay may be admirable and gravel bad. The subsoil is the geological formation lying directly beneath the top layer of turf or mould, and the latter need not now be considered.

The London district may be taken as a basis for our examination of subsoils generally. It is in a great, irregular, shallow basin made of chalk, the broad rim of which comes to the surface on the north in the Chiltern Hills and on the south in the North Downs. This is covered by varying layers of sand, gravel, clay, etc., but in some places the chalk crops out through them. The distribution of these differing subsoils is, both in the London district and elsewhere, so freakish that for details the reader must turn to a geological map; but their respective

merits may be considered. In a general way porous gravels and sands or chalk make the best sites, but this does not hold good for gravel subsoils near rivers, which are liable to hold surface water. The least desirable sites are probably those in the middle of a large area of bare clay, such as the low-lying tracts between Uxbridge and Edgware, between Leatherhead and Kingston, and the broad clay area south of Reigate. In wet weather the soil retains its surface moisture until it evaporates, and makes the air accordingly damper than it is above gravel or chalk. Where, however, the house stands on a hill, natural drainage lessens the trouble. A thin layer of gravel over clay may be most unsatisfactory if the site lies low, as it will get waterlogged unless there is some artificial drainage system. An advantage of clay is that it protects the water-bearing strata beneath it from surface pollution and therefore operates in favour of a pure water supply, which is important in rural districts where reliance has to be placed on wells.

It is generally desirable that a house shall rest on a site of uniform quality. If it sits, for example, partly on gravel and partly on clay, the different resistance to pressure offered by the varying subsoils may result in cracks developing in walls, unless this has been guarded against in the design of the foundations. A clay slope makes a difficult site, because after a long period of drought the clay shrinks and cracks, and following rain makes it swell and soften. These drastic changes tend to strain, and therefore to weaken, foundations, and there is a consequent danger of cracked walls. Garden walls, pavements and paths are also likely to suffer. A uniform bed of sand or gravel is an admirable place to build a house, for it yields uniformly to the pressure of the building, and surface water drains away very quickly. Isolated beds of sand, which are sometimes found (*e.g.*, near Watford) in a clay hollow, may be unsatisfactory, as they are apt to retain water unduly. Chalk or limestone subsoils may make good foundations, but the stone may lack uniformity, and sudden subsidences are an unpleasant possibility where there are cavities filled with sand.

All these possible defects of sites are not set down with a view to making the flesh of an intending site-buyer creep, but to emphasise the need of professional advice before matters have passed the preliminary stages of inspection and enquiry. It is an easy and inexpensive matter for an architect to have bore-holes made on behalf of his client, and such an exploration has more than one good result. It enables sites of thoroughly bad quality to be avoided, and the small demerits of ground which is mainly good to be estimated. It is very easy to spend two or three hundred pounds in abnormal foundation work, and if the man who is going to build knows this before he buys, it enables him to judge whether the price asked for the site is a fair one.

An eye should, moreover, be given to the land from the gardener's standpoint. Heavy clay soils will need the importation of large quantities of light loam and mould to give a good top soil, and the ground will need careful drainage to prevent its getting waterlogged, for practically no water can escape through a heavy clay. Perhaps the best for the lover of flowers are loams such as are found irregularly spread in broken patches in the London district. Chalk is fairly good to the gardener, because it retains a certain amount of moisture,

which keeps the top soil from the worst effects of drought, and above it beech, yew and box will especially flourish. The above notes are enough to show that there is much to be considered in the choice of a site, and that professional skill should be brought to bear on it.

So much for the consideration of some practical points which affect the relationship between architect and client; but, perhaps, I may repeat some more general questions, which Mr. Filson Young once asked, and try to answer them.

"Is the profession of architecture in a satisfactory condition? Are an educated taste and wholehearted love of beauty safe conducts to success in it? Are its members really satisfied? Are they contented with the conditions in which they have to work?" All searching questions which culminate in a sweeping statement: "It is not a matter of money—a beautiful building costs no more than an ugly one. It rests with the architects whether our buildings are beautiful or ugly."

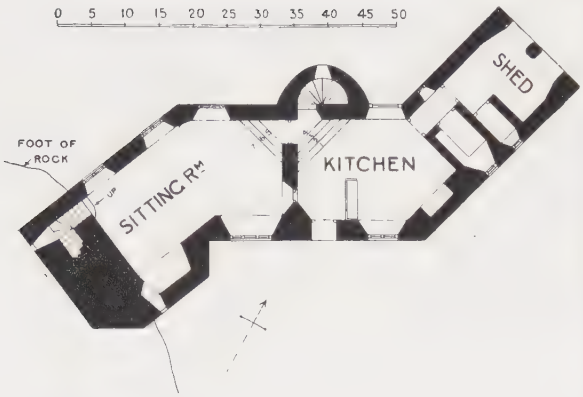
It is a commonplace of politics that a nation gets the Government it deserves, and it is no less true that a people gets the architecture it deserves. Architects exist only because there are clients, and the power of the purse is the controlling element. If those who pay for building want the best, they can have it—there was never more architectural ability available than to-day—but if they want banal work, ill proportioned and overloaded, they can find men to do it. Architects may and do seek to lead public opinion, but they have no power to drive it. Let us assume that an architect is commissioned to design a house and that he produces a good design which any committee of taste would approve. If the client wants something more startling and the architect feels that his reputation would suffer by producing it, he can only resign the commission. The client can, however, find quite easily a man of less æsthetic judgment and of more pliant habit of mind, who will produce something to please him, something which may be actively offensive. It gets built, and the critic comes along with the observation: "It rests with the architects whether our buildings are beautiful or ugly." In fact, the offending building may owe its ugliness to an architect who has "the commercial acumen of a cotton-broker" without the "imagination of an artist," or, perhaps, without the sincerity of the man who will sacrifice his pocket for the sake of his convictions. The latter attitude is, of course, a mighty Spartan standard to set up, and one that the average architect cannot accept if he would. Until people at large recognise that architecture is truly a thing that matters, the majority of the men who are responsible for design will be blown about by every wind of vain doctrine that has taken the fancy of the man that pays. Happily, public taste improves steadily and quickly, and architects are leading it with vigour and sincerity, but a new heaven and a new earth cannot be created in a vacuum.

CHAPTER II.—STONEYWELL COTTAGE, CHARNWOOD FOREST.

Designed by Mr. Ernest Gimson, and Built by Mr. Detmar Blow—The Pursuit of Simplicity—Sir Joshua Reynolds on Architecture—The Honest Picturesque Tradition and Comfort.

THERE are few more delightful tracts of country in the heart of England than the rocky patch of Leicestershire known as Charnwood Forest. Of forest, in the ordinary meaning of the word, there is little enough; for the twenty square miles that bear the name are barren in parts almost to desolation, and reach their highest point in the volcanic outcrop of Burdon Hill. These hills, indeed, are among the oldest in the world, the veritable stumps of mountains worn down by long ages of change, the crust of an earth that hissed and bubbled. Here is an igneous rock that slowly cooled and churned under unthinkable pressure, and sounded, indeed, the groaning of creation—the granite that they tamely quarry now for the paving of our country roads. It is in such a district that Mr. Sydney Gimson, whose winter home is at Leicester, eight miles away, decided to build a cottage for the summer months. The slope of a hill furnished an attractive site, rough with scattered boulders and gay with wild flowers. The wood that faces the cottage, Stoneywell, gave it a name. Mr. Ernest Gimson

12.—FROM THE EAST.



13.—GROUND FLOOR PLAN.

14.—THE GREAT CHIMNEY.

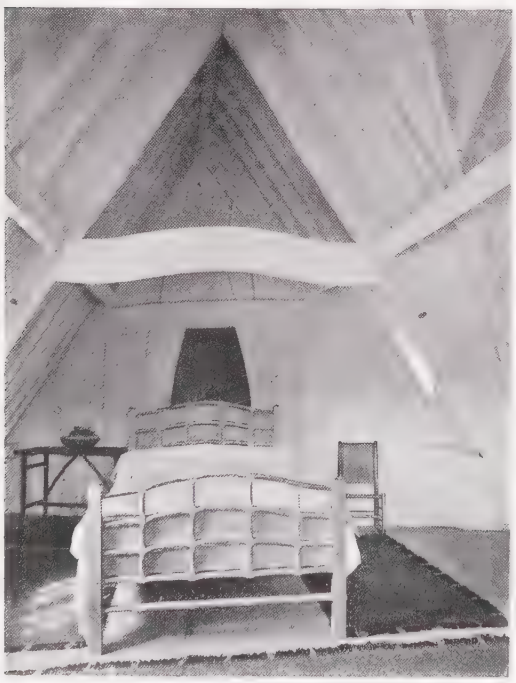
devised its form. The actual building was done by Mr. Detmar Blow, at that time, more than twenty years ago, captaining a little band of masons and gaining that practical knowledge of the crafts which has since stood him in good stead by rightly influencing his design.

Before going to a description of Stoneywell, it may be said that departure from the ordinary method of employing a contractor did not here involve increased expense, as is often the case, for the cottage cost only £920 (perhaps £2,000 to-day). Stoneywell is frankly an unusual product of the building art, and departures from the beaten track commonly involve abnormal expense; but here the total sum laid out represented a fair price for a like-sized building of the usual

15.—NORTH SIDE

16. CROWN, OUT OF THE HILLSIDE.

17.—FROM KITCHEN TO SITTING-ROOM.



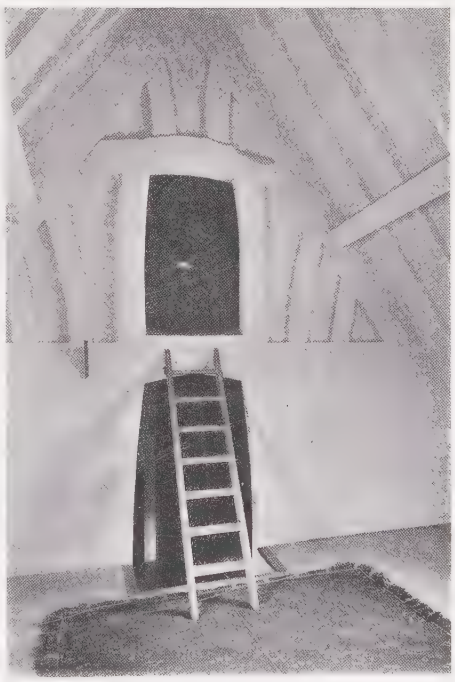
18.—A BEDROOM.

type. We approach the cottage past a motor garage built by the roadside, down the slope of the hill to the humble door set in the south-east front. It meets the visitor just as Fig. 16 shows it, the great chimney rising like a buttress at the south corner, and the adjoining gable nestling down in the hillside, as though the cottage sought protection in the bosom of the everlasting hills. Fig. 15 shows how swiftly the ground slopes, and the plan (Fig. 13) marks how the building twists to follow the contour of the site; yet, even so, seven steps are needed between kitchen and sitting-room. The entrance door brings us straight into the kitchen —the soft protection of a porch was scorned—and a settle serves to screen the hearth from the draught. The lintel over the fireplace is an amazing bit of construction, a single gigantic slab weighing a ton and a half, a rough shard of slate that had lain neglected in an old quarry until Mr. Detmar Blow espied it. To the right is a door to a passage, with adjoining larder and an exit to a shed, or, more properly, undercroft, where wood and the like may be stored. In the north wall is a big window, giving ample light, and to the left broad steps laid cornerwise lead to a triangular landing. Here starts a winding stair in a circular projection (shown in Fig. 15) that would take us to the bedroom floor; but first we go to the left, up three steps (Fig. 17) into the sitting-room, and see it just as it appears in Fig. 20. In the foreground is a stout oak trestle table, with rush-bottomed chairs of turned ash, made by Mr. Ernest Gimson; to the left a recess (that is in truth a chimney corner, for it is the internal result of the great stack we have seen outside), and in the right-hand corner a steep and narrow stone stair winding up in the thickness of the wall to the chief bedroom. Up we go

(walking, if not like Agag, delicately, at least with care) to find a room snowy with whitewash and wholly in the sloping roof. Here is an oak bedstead, very admirably made by Mr. Ernest Barnsley in that fashion which reminds one rather of the wagon-builder than the joiner, and eminently fitted to its surroundings. From this room we enter another -there is, of course, no corridor—from which again we may, if we will, pass upwards to another, neatly named Olympus. Reference to Fig. 16 shows a tiny window set high in the thatch. This it is that lights this entertaining bedroom, which it is fair to say was an after-thought, and is used only when the pressure of hospitality demands an extra and unusual bed. There is yet another bedroom over the north-east end of the cottage, which is reached from the middle staircase.

The general effect of the cottage reminds one of what Sir Joshua Reynolds said of architecture, when he pointed out that it possesses many principles in common with poetry and painting: "Among those which may be reckoned as the first is that of affecting the imagination by means of association of ideas. Thus, for instance, as we have naturally a veneration for antiquity, whatever building brings to our remembrance ancient customs and manners, such as the castles of the barons of ancient chivalry, is sure to give this delight." Though the cottage exhibits no features of conscious imitation of old work, the mere fact that it has been built in the light of old traditions and with a single eye to the contour of the ground throws back the mind to the days when the simplest sort of building followed no rules, but was evolved out of simple needs and local materials. Stoneywell therefore suggests, almost urgently, an association of ideas with the country life of centuries dimly remembered and but slightly understood, when the standard of physical comfort that we experience was not only unknown, but inconceivable.

The collaboration of Mr. Ernest Gimson and Mr. Detmar Blow has produced a type of dwelling that necessarily appeals, in its practical aspect, to a limited number of people, however widely its picturesqueness may be appreciated. The pursuit of simplicity in living is not incompatible with a reasonable satisfaction in carpeted floors and radiators and the like carnal pleasures. There is nothing essentially "simple" in steep stone staircases with very narrow treads, though these things have their entertaining aspect. Those to whom the agility necessary for proceeding to bed up a ladder has been denied by an inclement destiny will demand houses of less strenuous type, and none will think the worse of them for that. On the other hand, there is an



19.—THE WAY TO OLYMPUS

undeniable picturesqueness about the casual contrivances to be seen at Stoneywell, and they carry the mind back from the sophistication of modern life to the lean comforts with which our mediæval forefathers were content, if they were cottage folk. A cottage of this type is, of necessity, almost controversial in character. It may be said that if it is the right type, then 99 per cent. of the small country houses of to-day are hopelessly wrong; and, contrariwise, if they be right, this is not only hopelessly wrong, but still worse, affected. It cannot be denied that it gives the impression of age, and if

20.—THE SITTING-ROOM.

it could be proved that such an effect had been consciously and of intent contrived, the voice of criticism would be justly urgent. It is, in fact, the case that an old inhabitant of the district, who had been absent some years, greeted Stoneywell on his return with the puzzled observation, "Odd that I should have forgotten this old cottage." Nevertheless, Mr. Gimson cannot be accused of those tricks of building which have justly earned the stigma of "Wardour Street architecture," a sharp tribute to the maker of the sham antique. Stoneywell Cottage has been roughly, even rudely, built, but no tool has been lifted to mark a false impression of age. If it has the air of being old, it is only because old ways have been followed

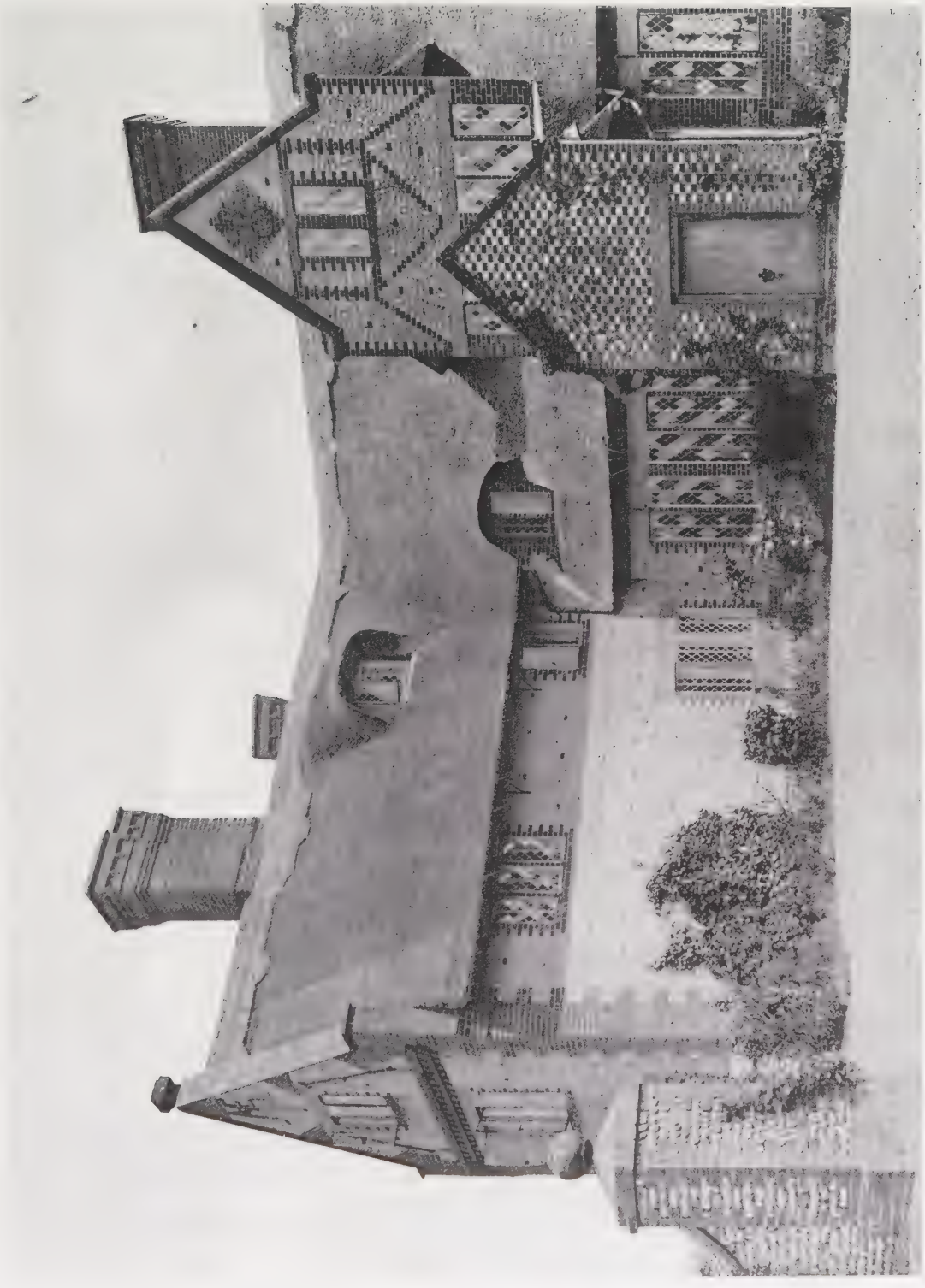
not because the least effort has been made to impart a false air of antiquity, and herein lies an important distinction and a very real difference. The walls have a notable texture. This, however, is not the result of working the stones in any special way, but of choosing them carefully for their varied colours and laying them with thick mortar joints in an "admired confusion" of size and plane that gives the surface a changeful life in sunshine and in softer lights. Thatch, too, gives a cottage an age-long air if it is laid in the old way, not unduly smoothed down. The practical question as to whether it is wise to build a cottage, of a sort which it would be idle to deny is very draughty, which one suspects is in cold weather very cold, and is certainly inconvenient if measured by ordinary standards of convenience, is one clearly for the owner and the owner alone to decide. He has got a house in which it must be entertaining to live, and if there are some drawbacks it is clear that he has weighed them, and that *to him and his* they are not, in fact, drawbacks, but amusing incidents. Moreover, there are people hardy enough—shall we say sensible enough?—not to think about draughts, or to recognise them when they blow. And if there is a draught that is felt, well—*il faut souffrir pour être belle.*

CHAPTER III.—HAPPISBURGH MANOR, NORFOLK.

Norfolk tradition of brick and flint — Butterfly plan with four wings — Mr. Detmar Blow's use of a raft foundation — and of thatch.

NORFOLK has always had its own building materials and methods, and nowhere in the county are they better represented than in the parish of Happisburgh, which lies on the coast a little south of Cromer. Its lands are, for the most part, of the prevailing flatness, bare and wind-swept except where groves of trees protect the outlying homesteads, whose brick or flint gables and sweeps of thatched roofs peep out from among them. But as you approach the village the ground swells up and rises almost to a knoll where stands the fifteenth century church. It was on a stretch of this rising ground on the edge of the village that Mr. Blow was asked to build a house. He rightly determined that it should be characteristic of the locality, and he has succeeded so well that, if an illustration of any section of the house were mixed up among a set depicting the village, it might be taken as belonging to any of the old houses near by. That, however, is by no means the case when any complete view of the house is before us, for it has a very decided plan and quite marked characteristics of its own. Houses with wings set at angles are now not at all infrequent, but the crop

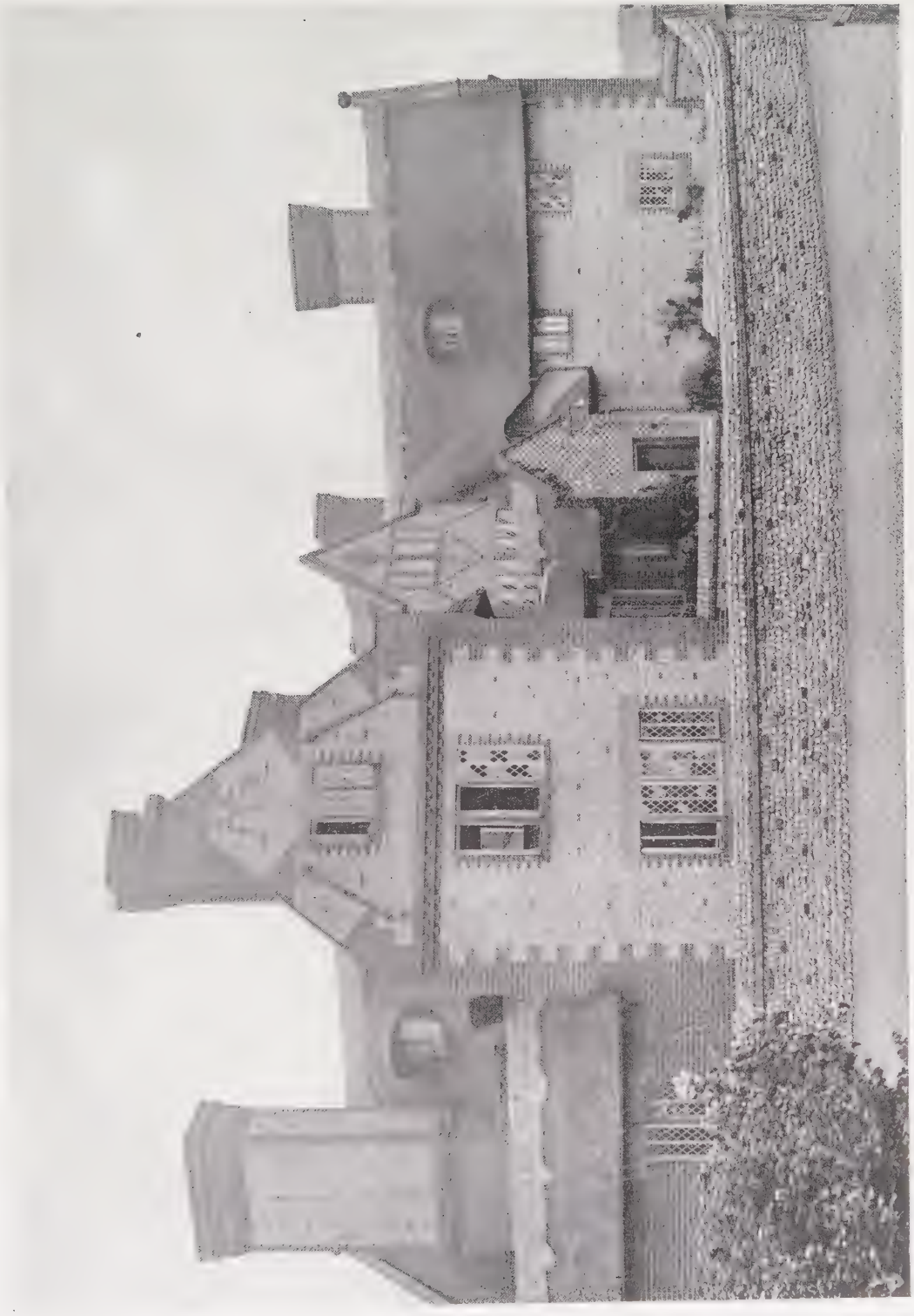
21.—ONE OF THE WINGS.



22.—THE ENTRANCE FRONT.

of them has risen recently. Mr. Prior was one of the first to carry out the idea of a sun-trap plan, in a house at Exmouth. That, however, had such wings on one side only, so that to Mr. Blow must be given the credit of taking the lead in building one with a double pair of them. He does not himself lay claim to the idea, but says that it "originated with my friend Mr. Ernest Gimson, who sent the little butterfly device on a postcard." Sir Edwin Lutyens has developed the butterfly plan at Papillon Hall. Planning on these lines was no easy task, as the very extended and unusual outline (especially adopted to afford sun-warmed recesses and shelter from blustering winds) had to enclose much accommodation conveniently disposed at moderate cost. Four thousand pounds was the limit given (be it remembered the year was 1900), and if the large extent of wall and roof, the fine solidity of construction and the ample offices are all taken into account, it will be seen that Mr. Blow showed resource and ingenuity. That would strike anyone merely looking at what is to be seen. But there is also the unseen—an element in house building of which the architect is apt to realise the necessity and expense much more than his client. At Happisburgh this was a serious matter, for, as Mr. Blow feared that the inroads of the sea might cause the sand to move, a huge raft of concrete formed the foundation both of the house and terrace. On this rose the walls, mainly composed of the local flint. Here and there, as for the porch and the outbuildings, flint gave way to brick, and of brick also are built the quoins, the framing and mullioning of windows, the patterning of the gables, the tall and shapely chimney-stacks that rise through the thick thatching of reeds from the neighbouring Broads. All this is true to local tradition at its best. In windy

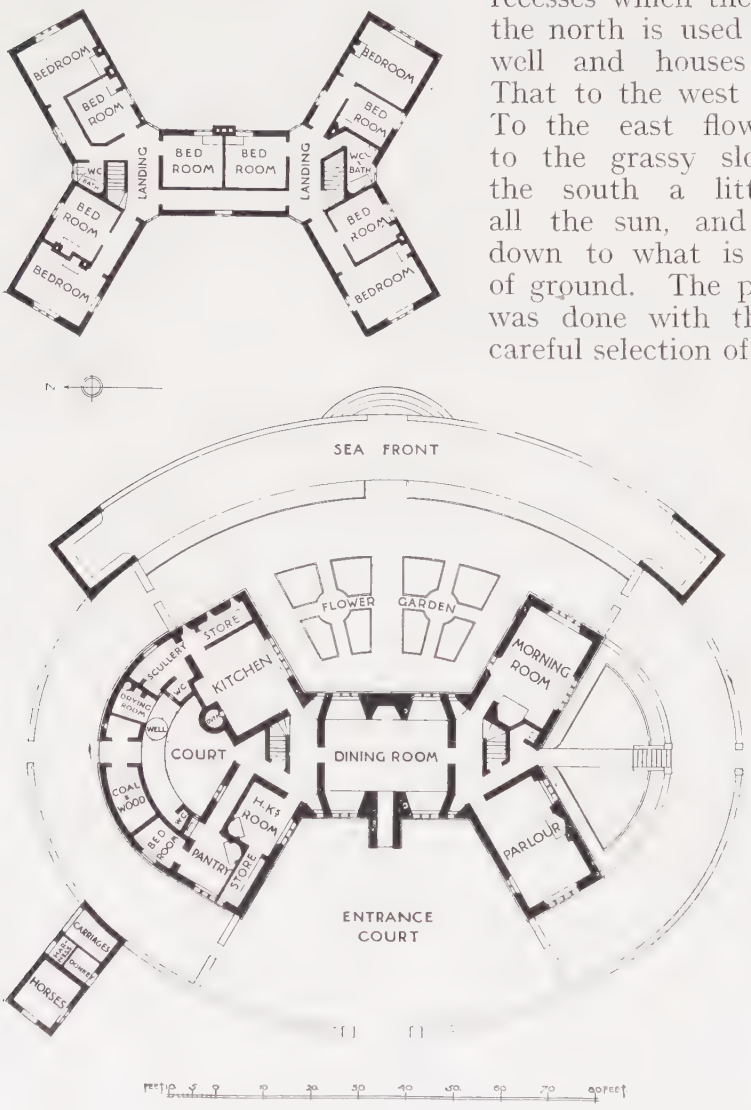
23.—A GARDEN STAIR.



21.—FROM THE NORTH-WEST.

Norfolk the thatching always curves with extreme suavity over the dormers and never projects over gables. That would be inviting the wind to play ugly tricks. The gable-ends are therefore built up above the roof-line and rise at sharp angles to a finialled apex. Below the coping, brick triangles wedge themselves into the flint to give strength as well as variety to the structure. One slight departure from older local methods Mr. Blow allowed himself. He used roofing tiles on edge, strongly bedded and in a liberal manner, as lintels over all openings.

The form of the house affords many pleasant groupings of chimney, gable and roof-line, varying continually as one walks around the outer oval, indicated on the plan, or steps down on to the lawns and open ground below. Of the four recesses which the house plan makes, that to the north is used as a little base court with well and houses of office set about it. That to the west forms a shapely forecourt. To the east flower-beds are a foreground to the grassy slope and to the sea. To the south a little angle garden catches all the sun, and a stairway from it leads down to what is no longer an arid stretch of ground. The planting of the sandy slopes was done with thoroughness of system and careful selection of subjects. They are therefore well on their way to becoming among the sheltered oases that are sparsely scattered about the wide expanse of this coast country.



25.—GROUND AND FIRST FLOOR PLANS.

If there is an oasis outside, certainly there is one inside, and a very pleasant one. In old-fashioned manner the porch gives directly into a house-place or chief room. In one of its four deep window recesses the bow-legged dinner-table may be seen set, half-hidden by an oak settle and handy to an ancient pewter-laden dresser. The walls are of plain oak wainscoting, and the mantel above the wide fire-arch is of white

washed brick. The whole aspect is agreeably home-like and simple. Sitting-rooms occupy one pair of wings and the offices the other. In each triangle formed by the scheme rises a stairway leading to the first floor, on which ten bed and two bath rooms have been adroitly packed. Servants are accommodated in the attics and on the ground floor, and if any of the five pairs of rooms on the first floor is small, it is none the less sufficient as well as inviting.

Thus the house possesses all the elements of success. It fulfilled the requirements and realised the hopes of the client. It is a piece of practical planning meeting modern requirements, yet avoiding the commonplace. It uses methods and materials which make it perfectly right where it is (though it would be perfectly wrong in another locality) and uses them with individuality.

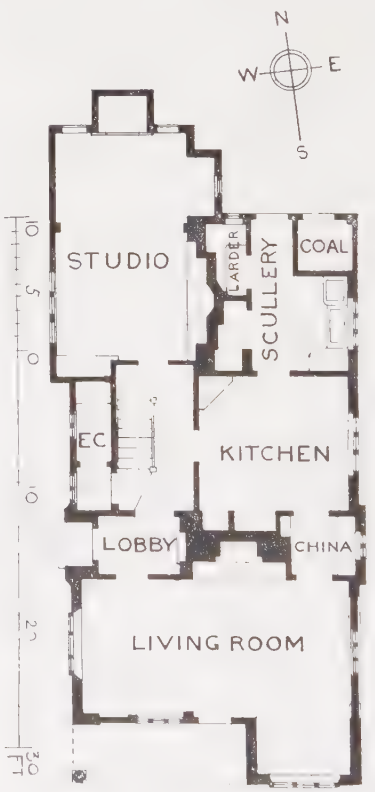
26.—THE DINING-ROOM AT HAPPISBURGH.

CHAPTER IV.—MARSHWAY, WALBERSWICK.

Concerning Seaside Architecture—Mr. Frank Jennings' Study of Suffolk Traditions—Poplar Weather-Boarding—Gorse in Reed Thatch.

FOR many people, not necessarily too fastidious, the pleasures of seaside places are prejudiced a good deal by the base architectural forms which they present. Nowhere are we more inclined to pray for an ædile who will exercise some control over the speculative builder, to whom such resorts usually owe their creation. Perhaps this bad state of things is due to the fact that resort to the sea by the multitude is not an ancient way of pleasuring. Brighton, Ramsgate and Margate have some pleasant old terraces, with their flavour of the Regency; but if we except the old ports which owed their shape to

27.—SOUTH GABLE.



28.—GROUND FLOOR PLAN.

29 FROM THE WEST.

30.—FROM THE EAST.

commerce rather than pleasure—*e.g.*, Aldeburgh and Sandwich—the architectural aspect of sea fronts is as bad as can be. The opportunities were great. In competent hands new places like Bournemouth might have taken on the orderly distinction which belongs to some Continental seaside towns.

It is the more pleasant, therefore, to find a place like Walberswick, which has followed a better way. This little Suffolk fishing village has grown much of late years. Had the builder of villas been allowed free course, the charm of the place would have evaporated. But a better spirit was abroad, and there was,

31.—THE DINING-ROOM.

fortunately, a local architect who was wise enough to understand, and cared to follow, the Suffolk tradition. This little house, which Mr. Frank Jennings designed for his own use, is typical of many others which the village owes to him. Although the original Suffolk type of cottage was essentially a timber construction, it was not the common practice to show the frame-work outside, but to plaster it over. The "black-and-white" manner never therefore became a local characteristic. The frame was set up on dwarf

walls with brick chimneys; then the whole gable end began to be built in brick, until in time timber was supplanted altogether. Weather-boarding was used a good deal, as is natural enough in such storm-swept country, but it was generally of poplar (instead of elm, as customary in southern counties), and the bark was not stripped, but allowed to drop off gradually as the boarding weathered. For roofs, thatch was almost universal, and of reed, not straw. The name of the house marks its placing on what was once marshland, and the reeds for the thatch are marsh reeds. An old practice, revived by Mr. Jennings, was to work some gorse into the thatch, a course which discourages birds from building in it. Reed is, in any case, less attractive to nest makers than straw thatch. The general aspect of the house is markedly picturesque, but this is not secured at the price of an inconvenient plan. The little oriel is not strictly a local type, but it is found as near as fifteen miles inland, and its practical convenience more than justifies its use. The living-room follows tradition in showing the timbers inside, and the low beam over the fireplace is another local touch. The staircase is an old example of early seventeenth century work, and was rescued from a cottage demolished at Stanton, near Bury St. Edmunds. Other details, such as a few doors and beams, are also *disjecta membra* of cottages that have disappeared.

32.—THE OLD STAIRCASE.

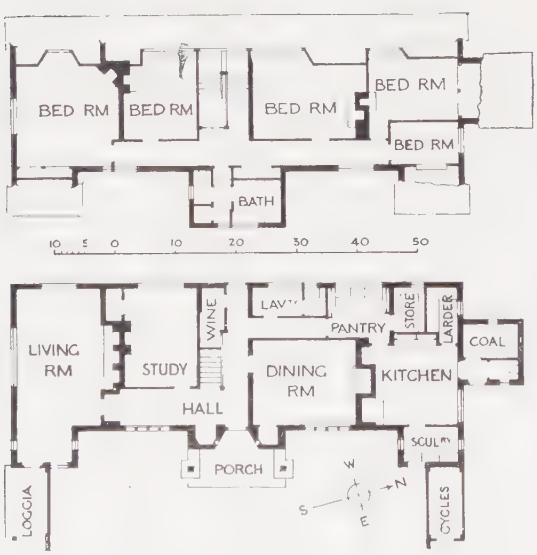
CHAPTER V.—THE THATCHED COTTAGE, BYFLEET, SURREY.

Early building traditions and the suburbs—Mr. Blair Imrie's skill in the farmhouse manner—Architecture in town, country and suburb.

THE Thatched Cottage is a very typical example of one of two main tendencies in modern house design, each of which shows an attitude, both towards architecture and life, hardly to be reconciled with the other. If Mr. Blair Imrie, who designed The Thatched Cottage, were to be judged by this house alone, he would be suspected of liking his building traditions early and taking them neat.

But other houses near by show him of wider sympathies, and in this cottage he was carrying out his client's wishes. That he did so very skilfully the illustrations show. A large overhanging porch of half-timber work, weather-boarding of ragged-edged elm and the thick thatch are all alike of the essence of the composition. It is, in fact, a house where the materials are dominant, and the design, pleasant as it is, of less account.

The house is unusually set with its front garden unseparated from the road by wall or hedge, and it encloses, with the thatch-crowned side walls, an open entrance forecourt of very welcoming aspect. If it were not that the front



33.—GROUND AND FIRST FLOOR PLANS.

34.—ENTRANCE PORCH.

35.—ENTRANCE FRONT FROM THE ROAD.

36.—GARDEN FRONT FROM SOUTH-WEST.

is a trifle self-conscious in its symmetry, and that the thatch has been laid with such extreme care that it has the air of being brushed and combed, it might be a farmhouse instead of a small country house of the twentieth century. It is, indeed, a slight effort to remember that it was invented for the enjoyment of someone presumably prosperous, and certainly not agricultural. The plans (Fig. 33) show that there is nothing of the farmhouse about it: the rooms are neatly disposed for purely residential purposes. Regarded as an exercise in picturesque comfort the house is a success, but there remains the question as to whether buildings of this sort are a sincere solution of the problem of housing twentieth century people in a twentieth century way. If we take an old farmhouse and remodel it in modest fashion to suit modern requirements, the satisfaction remains

37.—FROM THE SOUTH.

of knowing that we are utilising a thing genuinely old. There is, however, a great deal to be said for the opposite point of view; that a modern house should exactly represent its newness and its occupant. These two attitudes are not to be reconciled.

Each represents a point of view widely held, and there will always be people who will demand something with a reminiscent flavour. The claim that tradition is sacred and should be followed is a sound one always, but this type of house goes rather further. The Thatched Cottage would look more reasonable as a farmhouse in a country district than it does in the rather sophisticated rural air of this outer suburb of London. A country

farmhouse tradition is not necessarily valid for a suburban residence. A modern building in the country farmhouse manner may indeed fly in the very face of authentic tradition if it be not in accord with the *genius loci*. "Suburban" has come to be in some sort a name of reproach, but quite unjustly. There has been, and must always be, a middle world between city and country, which should take something of the character of both and forge from both elements something original to itself. Town architecture is, in its essence, a thing of long fronts, of small houses combined together in terrace or square to create units of size proper to the dignity of a city. Country houses are, in their essence, things separate, symbols of the idea that an Englishman's house is his castle. Hitherto the idea of suburban develop-

38.—THE DRAWING-ROOM.

ment has produced nothing distinctive except the compromise of the semi-detached. This offers no architectural opportunity: it precludes what dignity a terrace may yield, and destroys the individuality which even the simplest single cottage may possess.

Increasing facilities of transit tend to make the suburb more rural and less urban, and the tendency, therefore, has been to abolish the tyranny of the semi-detached and all that it implied. The rural note has been forced and the very thought of the suburb set aside as something painful and not to be regarded.

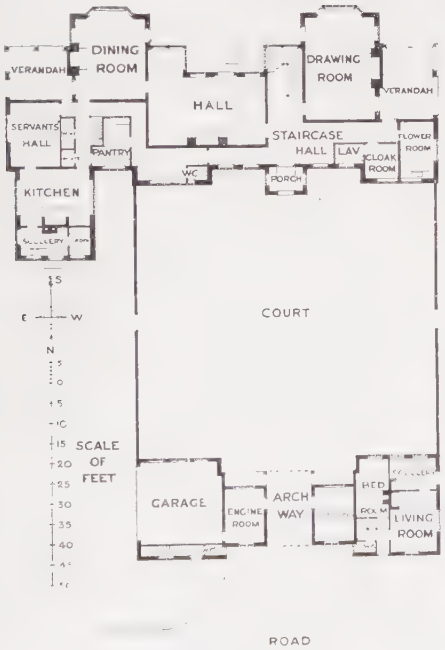
Yet the reaction is at work. The orderly classical traditions which governed the suburban as well as the urban building of the eighteenth century become more securely re-established. Whatever the validity of purely vernacular building in districts still emphatically rural, it is a little difficult to defend it in neighbourhoods suburban in fact if not in appearance, if it be claimed as a reverent following of tradition. As a piece of personal whim it can easily be defended by those who like it, for eclecticism is the motive power of practically all current architecture and is not likely to be disestablished in our time.

39.—STAIRS TO LANDING.

CHAPTER VI.—LITTLE COURT, CHORLEY WOOD.

Mr. John D. Coleridge's exercises in the Tudor manner—An Actor's country home—Honest half-timber—A well placed dining verandah.

CHORLEY WOOD has been fortunate in escaping the suburban taint in large measure, but in any case the outlook of Little Court is impregnable against the marauding builder. Its north side is unseen from the village street save through the iron gates of the entrance lodge and across the courtyard. Its garden front (Fig. 44) regards the common, and is thus assured of an unchequered outlook for ever. In the design and construction of the house Mr. Coleridge has gone back to Tudor models in the main, but that is not to say that



40.—GROUND FLOOR PLAN.

41.—LODGE FROM STREET.

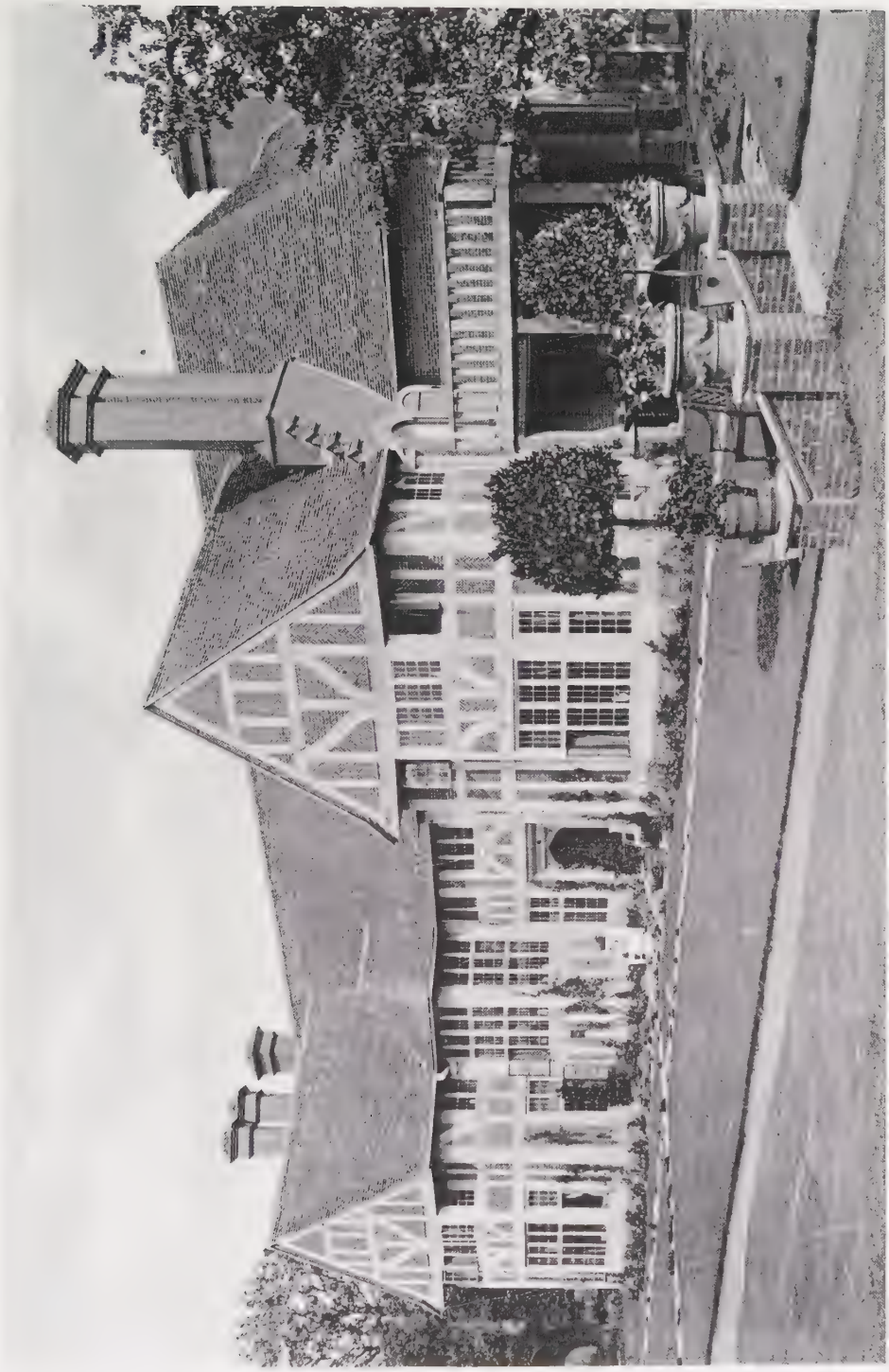
42.—ENTRANCE LODGE FROM COURT.

he has prejudiced comfort by any archæological fads. Perhaps the chief question to be answered by the architect of to-day is in what degree he may rely on the past for his inspiration. Certainly not in his planning, for thus would be reproduced all the inconveniences out of which we have laboriously grown through the centuries. On that most architects are agreed, though there are some to whom the old two-storeyed hall, a sure begetter of draughts, remains as sacred as the Ark of the Covenant.

In the other camp are the men who would have every building of to-day express its modern provenance, regardless of whether novel construction involves

43.—RECESSING OF THE SOUTH SIDE.

what the historical eye sees as ugliness. Fortunately, this conflict of truth with accustomed beauty does not arise in domestic building. The difference in cost between brick and timber on the one side and reinforced concrete on the other for a house of this type is not enough to weigh with its owner. In industrial buildings it is otherwise. The architect of such a house as Little Court is therefore free, on every ground, to express the needs of to-day in the materials which our forefathers used to such good purpose. He can leave to others those interesting and necessary experiments in design which are indicated by novel materials.



44.—GARDEN FRONT FROM SOUTH-EAST.

It follows that the choice of external design may range reasonably over a long stretch of centuries. An Early Tudor manner free from classical feeling pleased the late Sir George Alexander and his architect, and Little Court is the result. Had they chosen the more demure atmosphere of the end of the seventeenth century or the frank austerity of the end of the eighteenth they would be no less justified. It comes to this: we are the heirs of all the ages, and need not be driven out of a roving eclecticism by loud-voiced exponents of any one style. The question for the client is as to what manner best expresses his pleasure in the art of architecture. The question for the architect is whether he can, with due regard to his artistic convictions, put his client's wishes into the desired shape. If he can, the

45.—ENTRANCE COURT.

46.—THE HALL.

result will be a successful house ; if he cannot, it is likely to please no one. Mr. J. D. Coleridge has devoted much attention to half-timber design. Little Court was therefore for him a successful exercise in an accustomed manner. The oak framework is built of liberal timbers, and the brick filling devised in changeful patterns. No doubt the feature which would most astonish Mr. Coleridge's

47.—THE DINING VERANDAH.

æsthetic ancestors of the fifteenth century is an element in planning rather than in design. A Tudor outlook has not prevented him providing that most modern of features—a large verandah for outdoor meals (Fig. 47). It is related in position very conveniently to the dining-room and kitchen quarters, and a similar verandah adjoins the drawing-room.

The open air principle extends to the upper floor, for there is a large balcony (seen in Fig. 44) opening from the chief bedroom suite.

The garden is laid out simply, but well. There is a slight terracing on the south front, but no attempt to make a large feature of it, as is often and foolishly done on sites which do not in fact lend themselves to terraced treatment. The gate-house is not the least attractive part of the complete scheme. It includes not only the garage and quarters for gardener and chauffeur, but also three rooms for visitors' servants—a practical thought.

CHAPTER VII.—KIMBERS, HASLEMERE.

An economical type of house—Mr. Allen Chandler as craftsman and architect—Mrs. Meynell on whitewash—White interiors, their value and deficiencies.

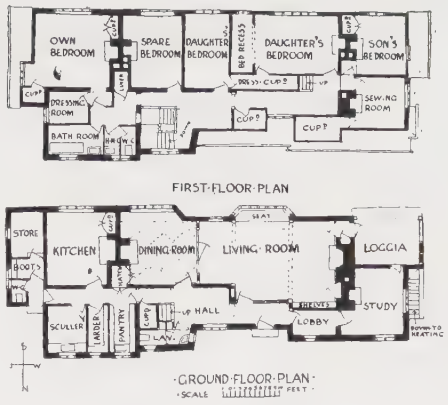
THERE is a good deal to be said for the type of long, narrow house, with end roofs vigorously hipped. Perhaps even more economical than the simplest form of a house—the short oblong box with a low lid—it utilises every available foot of roof space and makes as straightforward a piece of building as the economist need demand. Haslemere has suffered a little from its popularity, but there is one long hilly road climbing up from near the station which yields as pleasant a row of sites as you may find in the distant suburbs.

48.—WESTERN END AND ENTRANCE FRONT.

Perhaps Haslemere is affronted at being called a suburb, even with the polite classification of "distant," but it is hard to think of Surrey save as a splendid upper floor of London's great dormitory. These sites, however, rising steeply from the road and graciously decked with trees, have a natural beauty and a privacy which must satisfy the firmest desire for rural amenity.

The approach to Kimbers is by a steep stairway from the road and then through a belt of trees to open ground laid out in terraces. The simplicity of the house without, helped by the long roof-line, is expressive of its plan. A large, low living room, with the adjoining dining-room cut off from it only by

folding doors, a little study and a loggia, set at the corner to face the south and catch the westering sun—these are the simple elements of the scheme. As is wise in small houses, the staircase is modest, but it has a touch of character, for Mr. Allen Chandler, to whom the handicrafts present no mysteries, with his own hand carved and coloured pretty wooden figures to adorn the newels. The loggia gives on to a broad paved terrace, from which the view lies open far to the south and west. Save for the tile-hung upper storey on the garden front — a practical feature, as the south wind blows upon it almost unhindered from the Channel, and a traditional one in Surrey—the house is whitewashed within and without. It brought to my mind a description in one of Mrs. Meynell's essays: "The walls are all



49.—PLANS.

50.—GARDEN FRONT FROM SOUTH-EAST.

51.—TERRACE FROM THE WEST.

52.—LIVING ROOM LOOKING WEST.

thickly whitewashed, which is a pleasure to see. How willingly would one swish the harmless whitewash over more than half the colour — over all the chocolate and all the blue — with which the buildings of the world are stained! You could not wish for a better, simpler or fresher harmony than whitewash makes with the slight sunshine and the bright grey of an English sky."

That is especially true of the outsides of houses, and for interiors white walls are a safe background for such brilliance of colour as furniture and hangings may afford. But of late years the liking for white interiors has been overdone. White is the line of least resistance: it is never wrong; but, unless used as a background for some considered scheme of colour, it is merely a negative rightness. It is well to remember that white is not a colour and gives none of the pleasures of colour: a too close reliance on its use in decoration is not only apt to produce dreariness, but is—shall I say?—a little cowardly.

53.—THE FOOT OF THE STAIRS.

CHAPTER VIII.—KELDWITH, WINDERMERE.

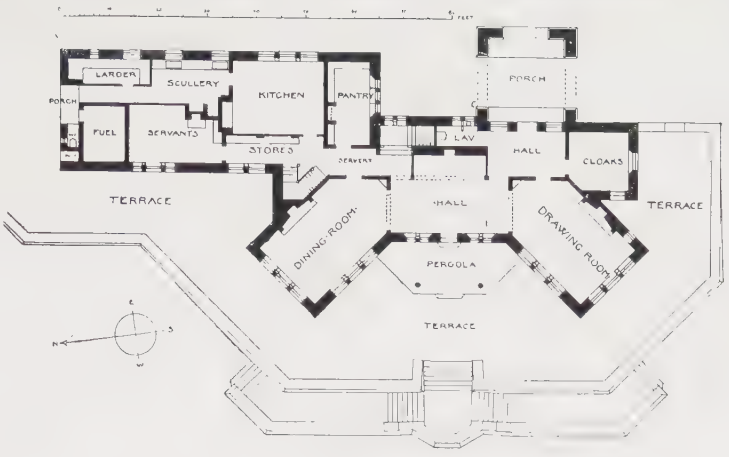
A refreshing revival of Gothic principles — Mr. North's mediæval manner — and ingenious handling of sun-trap plan — Modern equipment and its effect on building costs.

KELDWITH is a particularly interesting house, not only by reason of its unusual plan, but because Mr. H. L. North is one of the few architects who continue to hold strictly to the principles of the Gothic revival. Nor does he stop at principles, but quite frankly adopts typical Gothic forms, as is seen by the pointed arches, not only of the *porte-cochère,* but even of the doors of

54.—INSIDE THE PORTE-COCHERE.

rooms. The prevailing taste is so strongly in the direction of reviving Georgian traditions that the sight of a pointed arch rather makes one gasp. None the less, the treatment of Keldwith is very satisfactory, and goes to show that architecture in any national style can hold its own regardless of fashion, if it is

soundly and sincerely designed. Indeed, it is markedly refreshing to find an architect pursuing his individual way irrespective of the tendencies of the great majority. As I stood on the terrace and looked at the far-spreading view which includes Lake Windermere I could not help feeling that John Ruskin would have felt justified in Mr. North as one of his children. Nevertheless, there is no trace of mediæval copyism about the building. Not only in plan (though there especially), but in the individual treatment of the internal woodwork, Keldwith stands confessed a modern house: and this is as it should be. One of the mistakes which first weakened the force of the Gothic revival, and finally helped to strangle it, was a slavish adherence to mediæval forms and mouldings. Architecture became the affair of the archæologist and not of the living designer.



55.—GROUND FLOOR PLAN.

Keldwith stands on the side of a steep hill that slopes away sharply to the north-west. It is built of a blue stone marked with brownish streaks, and the green slated roof gets a touch of bright colour from the red ridge. Fig. 60 gives a fair idea of the garden front as it is seen

56.—FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.

from down the hill, but wholly adequate pictures could scarcely be got except from an aeroplane. The high road runs north and south behind the house, and the drive drops down to the big porch, or, more properly, *porte-cochère*, which appears in Figs. 54 and 59. Through it a small entrance hall is reached, and from there we pass into a suite of three rooms, comprising sitting-hall, dining-room and drawing-room, arranged so that they form a sun-trap on the terrace outside. This plan has many attractive qualities, for the windows in this trio of communicating rooms face every aspect from south-east to due north. Its disadvantage is that, if carelessly handled, rooms of very awkward shape are produced, and some architects have been tempted to

57.—A TOILET CUPBOARD.

58.—FIRST FLOOR CORRIDOR.

occupy the difficult corners that arise by angle fireplaces, which are unsatisfactory in sitting-rooms. Mr. North, however, has avoided this, and, though the dining-room and drawing-room are both five-sided, the fireplace in each case is set in one of the long walls, and the rooms are thoroughly comfortable. The two remaining angular spaces also created are very well absorbed, one by the cloak-room, where shape is unimportant, and the other by the back stairs. The front staircase, however, has straight right-angled flights. The picture of the hall (Fig. 61) shows the excellent treatment of the ingle-nook and the pleasant way the walls are covered with panelling formed of great elm boards, the abutting joints of which are covered with fillets. The mouldings throughout are distinctive

59.—FROM THE NORTH-WEST.

60.—ENTRANCE FRONT.

in character, representing carpenters' rather than joiners' work in the free use of the chamfers that are familiar in the woodwork of country wagons. On the first floor the cloistral appearance of the corridor emphasises the Gothic character of the house; but it must not be supposed that early traditions have been followed to the extent of disregarding modern comfort, for every bedroom on this floor has a bath-room adjoining it. A reference must also be made to a charming little boudoir on the top floor, panelled in plain oiled walnut, of so dark a colour, however, that it did not lend itself kindly to photography.

We often read sweeping criticisms of the unpractical way that architects

61.—IN THE HALL.

are said to equip houses. The common claim is that all bedrooms should have cold and hot water laid on. There is nothing novel about this, and, indeed, Keldwith is so fitted throughout. Not one bedroom lacks its own basin connected with the hot and cold water supply. The system has manifest conveniences, and I heartily commend it, but it is fair to state the other side. Some people dislike the idea of having in the bedroom a wastepipe that is connected with the drainage system, however adequate may be the methods of trapping to prevent the rising of gas. There is no risk of the latter with a well designed scheme, but prejudice dies hard. There is, further, the question of cost, which is considerable.

Basins are not cheap, but the main extra is for the additional piping involved. Sometimes bedrooms thus fitted have a little toilet recess or cupboard with a door that shuts off the basin from the room. This has been done in one of the rooms at Keldwith, as shown in Fig. 57, and it is a good arrangement.

It is to be remembered that equipment of a labour-saving sort is responsible for a heavy proportion of the total cost of a house. Including the elaborate plumbing work already referred to, very complete heating and electrical systems, lifts, tiling, panelling, etc., as well as the terraces and walls, the cost of Keldwith worked out at a price which I will express by the index figure of 13. If these special features had been omitted the index figure representing the cost of the simple house would have been no more than 8. This figure would have covered, of course, only very simple though adequate fittings. It would add much to the comfort of architects if their clients realised how elaborate equipment raises the cost of a house.

62.—A CORNER ON THE TERRACE.

CHAPTER IX.—BIRKET HOUSES, WINSTER, LANCASHIRE.

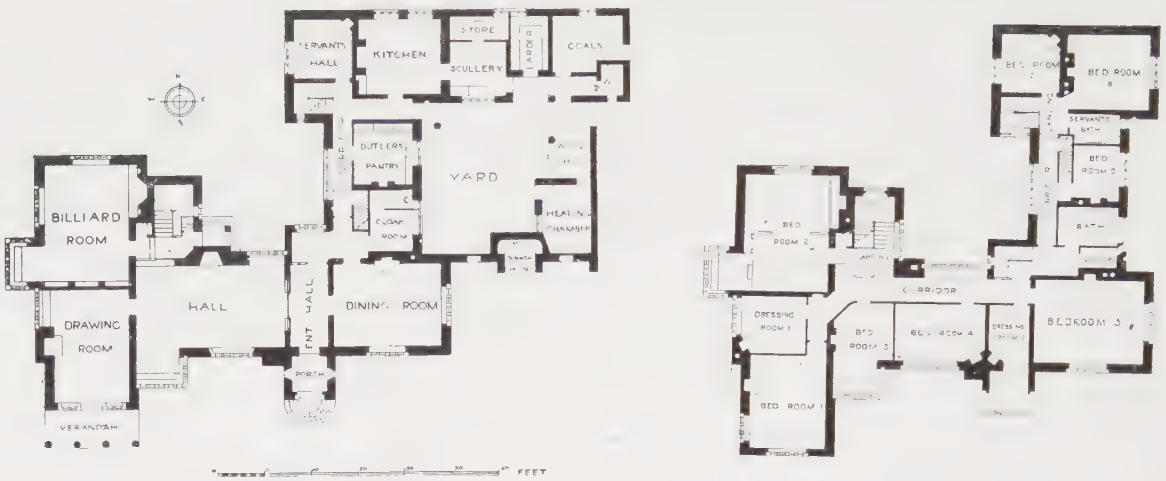
A Lake District House—Sincere Treatment of Jacobean Motifs—The Late Dan Gibson, the Man and the Architect.

THE word "Houses" in the title of this chapter is not in the plural by printer's error, but marks the survival of an old Lancashire use of the word for a single house. Though the estate on which it stands is in Lancashire, it belongs by right of its scenery to Westmorland, and, indeed, is only just across its border. The beauty of the Winster Valley, and of the neighbouring Cartmel Fell, would make them better known were they not so far from the beaten track. The country is engaging in all seasons and under every sort of weather. Perhaps the *genius loci* is most characteristically seen through swirling mists and soft rain, but the valley is of unimaginable beauty in brilliant spring weather. When I visited Winster, the heights of Wansfell and the Screes were capped with snow, and Nature conspired to repeat the impression everywhere. The cottage gardens were brilliant with white arabis, like banks of manna. The blackthorns were blazing with blossom, and the orchard trees were heavy with their snowy promise of fruit. The site chosen for the house stands well above the lower valley levels, and, as Fig. 65 shows, has wide open views to the north, south and east. The widespread plan is typical of Dan Gibson's Gothic ideals, in that there is no attempt at symmetrical treatment. The shape of all the rooms and their relations to each other were determined solely with reference to their liveable character and their aspects. The porch is carried up the full height of

63.—THE SOUTH FRONT.

64.—FROM THE EAST.

65.—FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.



66.—GROUND AND FIRST FLOOR PLANS.

the house and marked by a gable. We cross it to reach an entrance hall, which is divided from the living-hall by an open screen, shown in Fig. 69. Both hall and dining-room are richly panelled in oak, treated in the Jacobean fashion, which came to Gibson without any sense of archæological effort. From the west end of the hall opens the drawing-room, the only one in which Georgian motifs governed the panelling and decoration. One of the pleasantest things about the house is the veranda at the south-west corner. The four columns that carry the rooms above are plain and round and sturdy, without trace of classical treatment, and taking their character from the chimney-stacks, which are in the tradition of the district. At the north-west corner is the billiard-room with its big square bay, and, adjoining it, the main staircase, soberly

67.—THE SOUTH-WEST CORNER.

designed with square posts, plaster panels and turned balusters. The most attractive bedroom in the house is the one above the billiard-room (Fig. 70). It is divided in part by an oak and plaster screen, and would be ideal for an invalid, for one half has a large square windowed bay, and the other an open fireplace set in a panelled wall. Perhaps nowhere more than in the details of such things as simple bedroom chimneypieces did Gibson show his infinite care and interest. No two are alike, and all have character. One is illustrated, with a frieze of modelled plaster and a plain oak shelf (Fig. 68); others are in simply moulded Guiting stone. Everything is

68.—A PLASTER CHIMNEYPIECE.

thought out—the pantry cupboards as well designed for the purpose as the rather complex panelling of the dining-room. All the materials were local save the window mullions of Prudham stone, necessary because the local slaty rock is unsuited for fine working. The walls were built of stones from a demolished farmhouse and from old field walls. As they are not of a good weathering sort, the exterior of the house was rough-cast. The roof is covered with the green slates that come from Tilberthwaite.

In writing of the work of the architects of to-day I have always tried to be impersonal, because the public is concerned with them as architects rather than as men.

69.—LOOKING INTO THE HALL.

Even the best of rules, however, may justly have exceptions, especially when I must write "late" before a name. Dan Gibson was a man of by-ordinary character as well as an architect of unusual skill and promise, and this seems a fit occasion for revealing something of the man as well as of the artist. It was (to borrow a phrase of Stevenson's) "my inclement destiny"

70.—THE NORTH-WEST BEDROOM.

71.—THE STAIRCASE.

never to have met Dan Gibson, but the good I heard of him and of his work drove me to visit Windermere. There his most fruitful years were lived, and there he died in August of 1907 at the early age of forty-one. I visited six of his houses on or near the lake he loved so well. Brockholes, about half way between Windermere town and Ambleside, and built in 1898, was the first of any importance which he designed. The planning leaves something to be desired, the detail is rather immature, and there are one or two short cuts to architectural effect which his later judgment must have condemned, but it has all the interest of a pioneer work. Birket Houses was the last, and is known by his friends as "Dan Gibson's memorial." Probably it shows the fullest achievement of which he was capable within the somewhat narrow limits of style which he had

laid down. It is straitly traditional and wholly domestic. It reveals the local ways of building, picks up the thread of design where it was dropped in the seventeenth century, and does it in living fashion.

Whatever of praise is due to Renaissance motifs in house building in other parts of England, they never were at home in this Lake District, and never took their place naturally and faithfully. I am inclined to think, therefore, despite my personal preference for a graver manner, that Gibson, with his passion for sound and beautiful craftsmanship, for work essentially personal, was right in rejecting the later development of design and in setting himself to give a new vitality to Jacobean treatment. This he undoubtedly did, and it was a natural flower of his character. It is difficult enough to reconstruct in the mind the temperament of a man not personally known, but as I went among his clients and friends—and his clients were always his stoutest friends—I formed an impression so pleasant that I set it down. Dan Gibson was in all ways a big man. Physically fine, he revealed to all who knew him a personality of which we like to think as typically English. Sunny and debonair, he thought well and spoke well of his fellows. A keen student of nature, eager and strenuous in his art, a vigorous sportsman, devoted to his family, a bulwark to his neighbours, and with a stately yet winning courtliness of manner, none more completely than he realised that the chief business of life is to be alive. He had been gone four years when I visited the place where his prime was passed, but his acquaintances still said his name softly, and I went nowhere that the memory of him was not lively and fragrant. It was a heartening thing to meet those for whom he worked, and to build up piece by piece a picture of the man, to see how the good he did lives after him. By losing Dan Gibson architecture lost an artist whose achievement was good, but of whom greater things were justly expected, and those who never knew him, no less than his friends, lost a forceful man of a type that the country can ill spare.

72.—IN THE DRAWING-ROOM

CHAPTER X.—THE MURREL, ABERDOUR, FIFE.

A Bachelor's House—With Separate Servants' Quarters—Designed by Mr. F. W. Deas—Sandstone and Pantile—A Great Walled Garden.

THE golfer who goes to St. Andrews to perform his vows will notice, if he can tear himself from the links, that the old farm buildings of Fife have marked characteristics. They generally form a rather scattered group with low walls and broadly pitched pantiled roofs freely hipped, and ridged with bold, half-round tiles. Sometimes the builder has indulged in a touch of fancy by building a shed on an octagonal plan. This latter feature is not peculiar to Fife, for it is seen not infrequently in Northumbria, but always it gives diversity and interest while remaining a reasonable variation on the ordinary square end. When Mr. F. W. Deas decided to build a country house for himself in the kingdom of Fife, on the coast that looks southwards across the Forth to Cramond and Granton, he wisely followed the farmhouse traditions that he found near him. Nor did he do so without good reason. Though The Murrel is a little country home, it has also a quite serious small farm, as the plan shows. The site was not without its difficulties.

73.—IN THE SITTING-ROOM.

74.—KITCHEN COURT FROM NORTH-EAST.

75.—THE ENTRANCE FRONT.

The hill sloped down in a south-westerly direction towards two burns. Every way were fine views, and the curved line of the main garden front grew from a desire that the terrace should face due south, but that, nevertheless, the view down the glen should not be lost. The approach to the house is by a road running from the west. As the ground here dips southward, an opportunity was provided for a pleasant little forecourt leading to the entrance porch. In Fig. 75 the house is seen across this court.

The mass of the walling is of rich cream-coloured sandstone. Four quarries provided it, so that the slight variation in the colour of their products might give changefulness to the surface, which here and there is emphasised by the use of a few blocks of dark bastard whin-stone. It would be hard to find a more agreeable contrast than is given by the red pantiles which cover the interesting broken masses of the roof.

76.—SOUTH FRONT FROM WEST.

77.—ON THE TERRACE LOOKING WESTWARD.

We enter the house to find a small hall, from which open the sitting-room and dining-room. The former is an attractive place, with its simple oakwork round the fire, its plain unpanelled door, its large polygonal bay window to the south-west, and the veranda which faces west, so that the declining sun may light the supper

table set there. A very practical point may be noted in the arrangement of the veranda doors. They are two, outer and inner, and in the space between them is a hot-water pipe, which gives clemency to any outer air that may seek an entrance during winter—a very wise provision in a northern climate. Going now to the dining-room, we find a porch with double doors connecting it with the south veranda, used as a breakfast loggia. From it there is a passage to a little room where garden chairs are kept, and, beyond that, to a small two-storey building that is workshop below and fruit store above, the latter reached by an outside stair from the inner courtyard, as appears in Fig. 74.

So much for the downstair rooms, for the occupation of the bachelor owner of The Murrel. In order, however, that the plan may be understood, the building

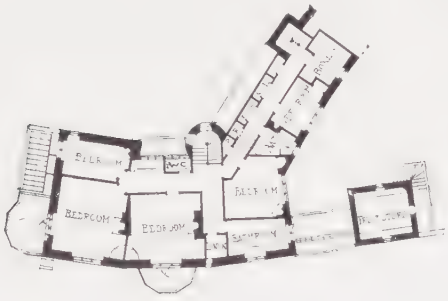
78.—HOUSE AND GARDENS FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.

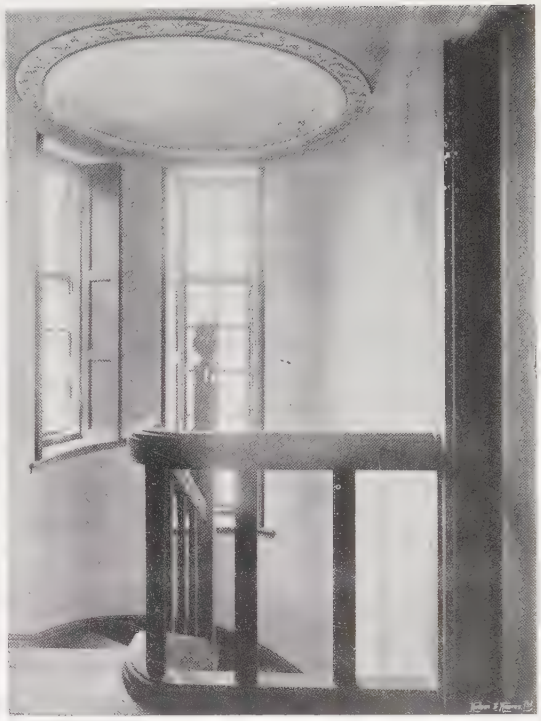
must be regarded rather as two houses than as one. The domestic arrangements for which it was planned provide for a man who cooks, for his wife who does the housework, and also for their family. The north-east wing, therefore, is cut off entirely from the south-west, except by one communicating door on each floor. The inner courtyard, which takes the form of a rough triangle, is set apart as a private province and garden for the servants, and is separated from the great terrace by a long buttressed wall. This connects at its eastern end with the motor-house, which cars can reach by the road that skirts round the north block of buildings. The latter contains the kitchen premises, farm buildings and racquet court.

This court was built for squash racquets; its floor space is thirty feet by eighteen feet, and a tiny gallery for spectators was not forgotten. It is lighted only from the top—an important point, for a long range of vertical

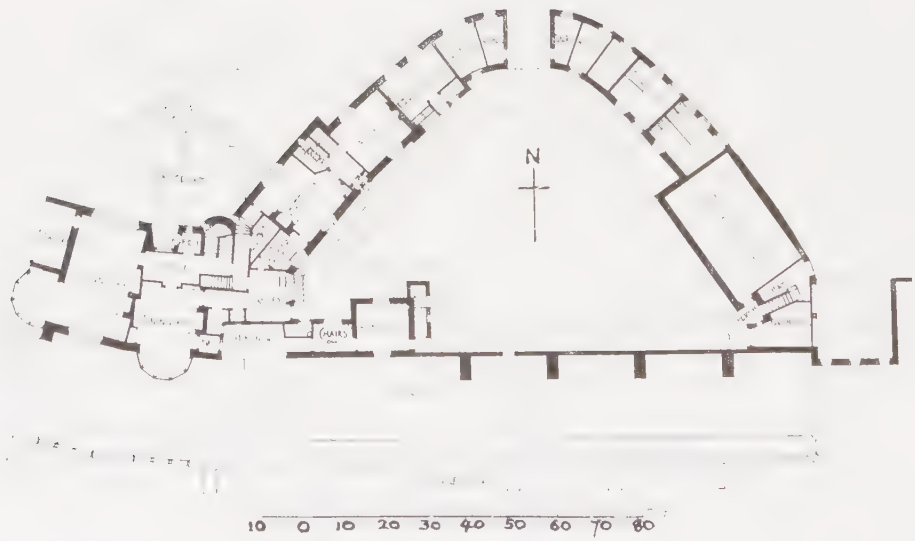
lantern lights would have been unsightly. From the east end of the broad terrace a flight of steps leads down into a great walled garden, admirably seen in Fig. 78.

Entering the house again, we go up from the hall by the staircase, semi-circular in plan, which fills the tower-shaped projection seen on the entrance front (Fig. 75). At the head of it is a little saucer dome with an edging of modelled plaster. The roofs of the big bay windows serve as ample balconies for the two chief bedrooms, and they are





79.—AT HEAD OF STAIRS.



80.—PLANS OF THE MURREL.

fronted by lead panels, which make a very attractive finish. Each bedroom has a fitted wash-basin fixed to a broad slab of Hopton Wood stone. Another little point of interest is the curved skirting used everywhere to prevent the settling of dust in unreachable corners. The north-east wing, dedicated to the servants, connects on this floor with the owner's quarters only by one door, and has a separate staircase to the rooms below. Altogether The Murrel is a house of unusual interest.

81.—FORECOURT FROM NORTH-WEST.

CHAPTER XI.—LAVEROCKDALE, NEAR EDINBURGH.

Traditions of Scottish House-building—Sir Robert Lorimer's Interpretation of Stevenson's Ideals—The Vertical Line in Scots Architecture—A Children's Attic.

WHEN Robert Louis Stevenson sent out his book of poems he could find no finer wish to put in his Envoy than

> Flowers in the garden, meat in the hall,
> A bin of wine, a spice of wit,
> A house with lawns enclosing it,
> A living river by the door
> A nightingale in the sycamore.

82.—THROUGH THE FORECOURT ARCHWAY.

Among the thousand unavailing regrets which come with the thought of that Samoan grave under the wide and starry sky is one that "R. L. S." did not live to know the late renewing of Scottish house-building. There are a score of phrases that those who love him remember, phrases scattered through his poems and stories and letters, which show him, a wanderer in search of health, keenly appreciative of the fixity of home. Remembering the lines already quoted and his passion for Edinburgh, which the grey city so ill requited by its assaults on his health, we may believe that he would not have thought them ill applied in a description of Laverockdale. No more than a quarter of an hour's journey from Princes Street, the house is so

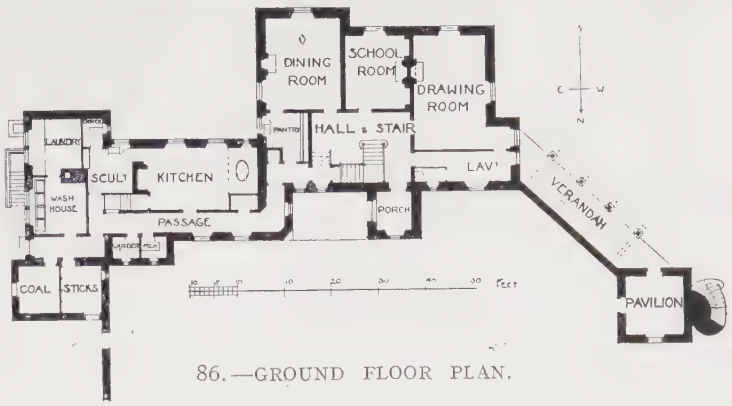
FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.

84.—THE ENTRANCE HALL.

distinctively Scottish in character, so aptly placed in the theatre of the Pentland Hills, that I have shame in presenting it so ill, when the author of the *Picturesque Notes* would have dealt with it so justly. There truly is the "living river by the door," a burn running through the garden, a burn that would give sport to the trout-fisher but for the wild herons that are before him—and this a quarter of an hour from Princes Street. For the nightingale in the sycamore I cannot vouch, though I do not deny; but at least it is true that the grouse can be heard calling from the hills. Laverockdale's owner, Mr. Ivory, has also reclaimed gardens from the wild, so that it might be "a house with lawns enclosing it."

85.—FROM THE NORTH WEST.

The problem of building in what is known as the baronial style has difficulties which are suggested by the very name. The early history of



86.—GROUND FLOOR PLAN.

Scotland knew no small domestic architecture, for the times were against it. Much later than in England did Northern building retain an element of the defensive, and for reasons sufficiently obvious. Save in occasional affray, no shot has been fired in civil trouble in England since the end of the seventeenth century. Loyalty to the House of Stewart, however, caused an unsettlement in the Scottish counties, which, added to a lack of wealth, prevented that free building of small houses which alone makes for a rich vernacular style. So it comes that Scotland has no background of building tradition at all comparable with the small manor house of the Cotswolds, the red-tiled Sussex cottage or the half-timbered Cheshire farm. If, then, it be desired to build a small house in a manner that shall recall earlier Scottish history, the architect has to employ forms familiar from their use in far larger buildings, and belonging to a mode of life very markedly simple. His problem, then, is to get the right spirit into his work, while avoiding archaisms that have lost meaning, and to do it without falsifying the scale of the building.

Anything like a careful examination of the accompanying plans and photographs will show how well Sir Robert Lorimer has dealt with a set of

87.—GARDEN FRONT ACROSS THE BURN.

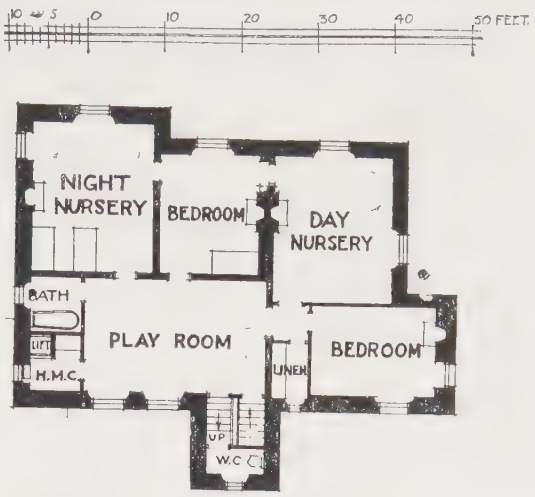
88.—DINING-ROOM.

89.—DRAWING-ROOM.

requirements full of difficulty. Though the house is not large, it has a marked dignity. Though it is dignified, the quality is not won by the loss of that convenience proper to modern planning. It is traditional in spirit, without the killing weariness of old detail copied in the letter.

This aspect of the house has been considered at some length, because the building of small houses in Scotland to-day has been rather slow to acquire merit. There have been too many attempts to give them a Scottish flavour by the addition of meaningless turrets and other features which cannot survive reduction in scale without becoming incredible. Two short cuts have been attempted — one, in the work of a

Northern school of *L'Art Nouveau*, now happily dead; the other by the borrowing of English motifs and traditions and even ways of employing material, which were foredoomed to failure, because they were intrinsically foreign to the land and climate. One was too enterprising, the other not enough. The man who turned his back on Scots traditions "sacrificed his crew"; another who used them badly "brings back his seamen in a cock-boat and has lost the ship." It is, however, by such artists as Sir Robert Lorimer that new point and direction have been given to Scottish house-building, which will lead in time to the growth of a new tradition. But I must turn to a description of Laverockdale.



90.—PLAN OF NURSERY FLOOR.

The house is separated from the road by a little wood of high trees through which the north front rises strongly and simply. A forecourt is formed on the west side by a delightful little pavilion and on the east by a wall pierced with an archway, through which the camera has looked (Fig. 82). The pavilion is consecrated to children. On its ground floor rest bicycles and toys, while upstairs on rainy days the making of toffee can proceed unchecked by the criticisms of elder folk. On the south-west side of the wall that joins the pavilion to the house has been built an admirable veranda, used as a conservatory (Fig. 83), to which there is a door from the drawing-room. With the

91.—NURSERY HALL ON ATTIC FLOOR.

sun on this side we get the full value of the attractive sandstone, of which the house is built, of a tone in which ruddy pink and red are softened by cream and grey. The roof is thekked (to use a pleasant old Scots word allied with the southern "thatch") with old Forfarshire slates, which give an air of maturity to the building. In the view of the garden front across the burn, the outstanding quality of Scots domestic architecture is happily emphasised, viz., height, unmodified by any treatment that brings competing horizontal lines. It is this that preserves to houses built in the baronial manner a character of Gothic art, wholly independent of details or mouldings which may well be classical in character without prejudicing the effect.

The inside of the house attracts not only by its excellent planning, but by the beauty of the eighteenth century furniture that Mr. Ivory has collected. The lighting of the dining-room from the south and east makes it very sunny and cheerful, an effect heightened by the white painted panelling. The latter is again a feature of the drawing-room, which boasts one of the fine old brass grates with brackets for fire-irons which are so distinctively an Edinburgh product. The planning of the kitchen quarters is good, the pantry being between the dining-room and servants' passage. The latter leads direct from the coal-store to the house without passing through kitchen or scullery, a point not always considered. The ample space given to laundry and wash-house is more usual in Scotland than in English houses. Coolness is a most important quality for a kitchen, and as the latter faces south, it has been made very lofty, and the extra height has been taken from the floor above. Just outside the kitchen is the service lift, which runs to the pantry of the nursery quarters on the second floor. The stair balustrading is in mahogany, neither stained nor polished, but rubbed down with rotten-stone and oil, a treatment which not only gives a rich colour, but leaves a surface soft as silk. The first floor is well planned and provides a separate little bedroom suite for guests. It is, however, to the planning of the second floor I draw special attention. It is wholly dedicated to the children. The nurseries, pantry, etc., are grouped south and west round a central playroom fitted as a gymnasium with swing, trapeze and monkey-rope. It is altogether a particularly happy piece of nursery planning, and shows what highly efficient use can be made of an attic floor if treated as a whole.

CHAPTER XII.—HIGH MOSS, PORTINSCALE, KESWICK.

Concerning Well Staircases—Mr. W. H. Ward's Treatment of a Lake District House—Mrs. Meynell on the Decoration of Shadows—Value of Clean Backgrounds.

HIGH MOSS is one of the many successful little houses which have been built to Mr. W. H. Ward's designs by Derwentwater. The feature of the plan is the grouping of the rooms round a central well staircase, which is the more effective for being painted a strong red. Generally speaking, the attempt to emphasise the staircase in a small house is apt to miscarry, but the very simplicity of the treatment at High Moss carries it to success. Unfortunately, the smallness of scale and the impossibility of getting any distance from it militates against the camera's attempt to give a fair idea of its character. Against a staircase centrally placed there is always the objection that it occupies, with its well, more cubic space than the more ordinary type which is built against an outside wall. In this case, however, the site indicated a house planned in compact, rather than in extended fashion. One of the disadvantages of a square house of this sort is that it is apt to look blockish unless something is done to mask its shape by giving interest to its outlines. Mr. Ward has managed this ingeniously on the entrance front by throwing out two angled projections, which flank the entrance. Though this device gives odd-shaped spaces, one is utilised for domestic offices, which need not be square, and the other by a little lounge. The hall is a delightful room with a practicable ingle, and

92.—THE PORCH

93.—FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.

94.—NORTH SIDE FROM NORTH-WEST.

the loggia is attractively placed next to it. The site slopes down so sharply from north to south that there is a difference of a dozen steps on the ground floor. It is in this that the advantage of a central well staircase appears, because the bedrooms on the north side open from the main landings, and those on the south from the half-landings. Altogether, the

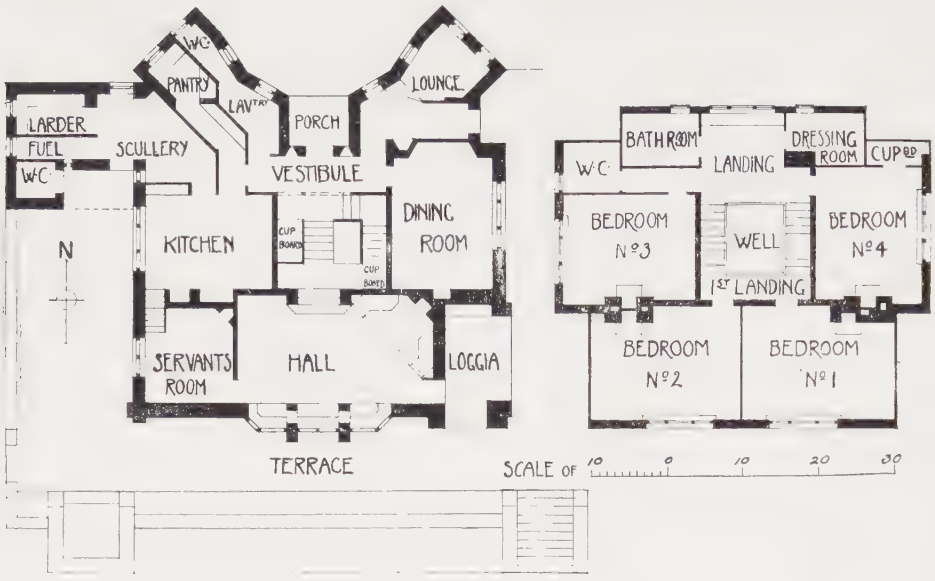
95.—ON THE STAIRS.

planning presented a great many difficulties, which have been ingeniously overcome.

The exterior of the house is typical of what a Lake District building should be. The more sheltered north side is of the local green slaty stone, and the roof is covered with green slates. In order that the plastered chimneys might not look too vigorously white above the roof, they also were treated with rough-cast

96.—ENTRANCE FRONT FROM THE NORTH.

97.—THE GARDEN FRONT.



98.—GROUND AND FIRST FLOOR PLANS.

99.—IN THE HALL.

tinted green. The garden front is plastered and white, a pleasant contrast to the rather grim colour of the neighbouring masonry. There are practical disadvantages about external whitewash which have to be faced, but they are not serious. It needs to be renewed sometimes, and climbing plants which have made their home on the walls are then apt to suffer unless they are handled with care. Whitewash indoors is satisfactory, both because it is hygienic and the best of backgrounds. Mrs. Meynell, who is always stimulating and subtle in her appreciations of architecture and

decoration, has something to say about it: "Another good reason that we ought to leave blank, unvexed and unencumbered with paper patterns the ceiling and walls of a simple house is that the plain surface may be visited by the unique design of shadows. . . . The shadow knows nothing except its flat designs. It is single; it draws a decoration that was never seen before, and will never be seen again, and that, untouched, varies with the journey of the sun. . . . So does the grey drawing, with which you have allowed the sun and your pot of rushes to adorn your rooms, play the stealthy game of the year." Whitewash is one of the things which make simplicity easier. As modern life goes, simplicity is achieved only by rejections. Doubtless to the Japanese it is more or less instinctive, and issues from a just choice of one or two beautiful things and an ignoring of such decorative banalities as hail us from every shop window, and shower on us from the gift of unthinking friends. It may be impossible to purge the foreground of our rooms of objects in which we cannot honestly take pleasure—the demands of friendship and kinship are insistent—but we can at least preserve a clean background, which will give to the superfluous the chance of looking inoffensive.

CHAPTER XIII.—DRAKESTONE, STINCHCOMBE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

Mr. Oswald Milne's Handling of Gloucestershire Traditions—Arched Garden Stairway and Pool—A Philosophy of Slates—Local Materials and their Colour.

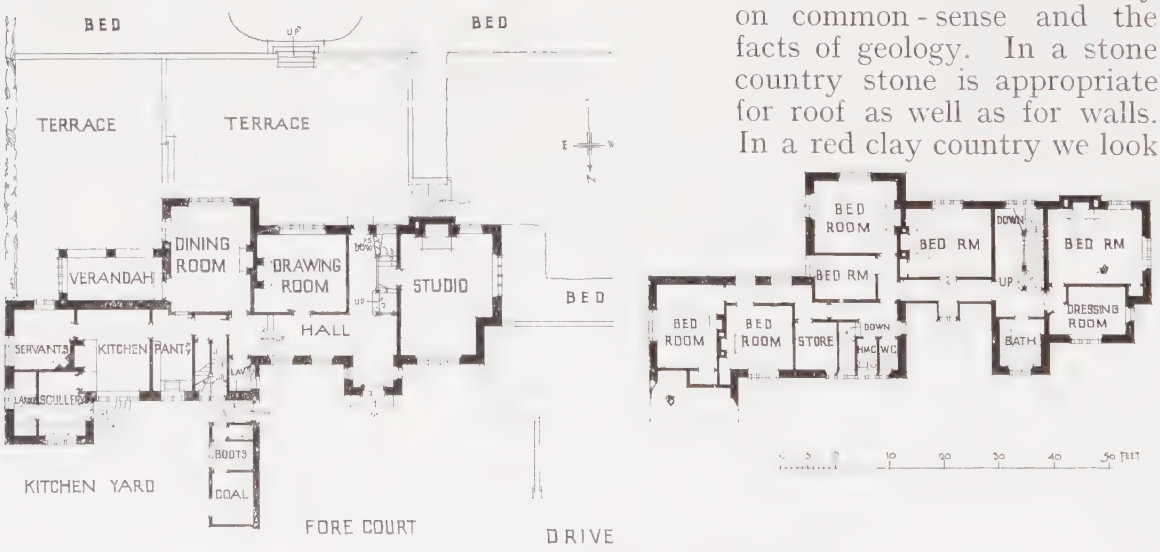
BUILDING in Gloucestershire lays an especial responsibility on the architect. The local traditions are so strong and individual, and the materials need to be handled with such certainty of touch, that any failure to appreciate their character becomes obvious at once. Mr. Oswald Milne was fortunate in being able to place Drakestone under the lee of a hill. There are fine sweeping views from south-west round to south-east, and, as Fig. 101 shows, the house sits solidly on a terraced site. Its stout walls of golden stone, flashed with blue, and the brown roof are outlined clearly against the background of trees. Mr. Milne has been happy in his treatment of the levels. The main garden front is bordered by an ample garden terrace, which is held up by stout retaining walls pierced by a stairway. Other descents lead to a broad lawn. From this level there is a considerable drop westwards, which has been made the occasion of a charming double stairway built over an arch and grouped with a shaped pool (Fig. 104). The plans (Fig. 103) show well enough the convenient disposition of the house within, and the picture of the hall (Fig. 106) indicates the pleasant simplicity which prevails throughout. Drakestone is a good example of the success which comes from the right handling, in the simplest way, of materials beautiful in themselves. The

100.—UPPER TERRACE STEPS.

101.—GARDEN FRONT.

102.—THE WEST SIDE.

house owes much to its roof of brown stone slates. The whole question of slates has been somewhat involved in controversy, due to the objection, very properly taken, to the employment of thin, smooth, purple slates from Wales in those parts of England where the traditional roofing has always been of tiles. Moreover, the mildest æsthetic opinion is outraged by the colour contrast between red brick walls and a textureless purple roof. In the result slates get a good deal less than their due. Welsh slates, and particularly the grey varieties, look altogether admirable in their own country. Especially is this the case when the walls are of stone, whether left its natural grey or whitewashed. The principle involved in our respect for local building traditions is based ultimately on common-sense and the facts of geology. In a stone country stone is appropriate for roof as well as for walls. In a red clay country we look



103 GROUND AND FIRST FLOOR PLANS.

no less naturally for the tiled roof. The whole question would be very simple if it could be dismissed in this clear-cut fashion; but what are we to say of districts which possess both of these main geological characteristics? There is obviously a call for compromise. We may take the case of Leicestershire. The old Swithland quarries in Charnwood Forest yielded exquisite slates of a colour in which purple, green and blue were mingled. When time had dealt tenderly with them and lichens had flushed their surface with gold the effect was altogether delightful. Unhappily, the quarries are no longer worked. If a man will build a roof of Leicestershire

104.—A GARDEN STAIRWAY.

slate in Leicestershire, he must strip old barns for the purpose. That may lead to vandalism and will certainly be costly. It would be absurd to deny this man of Leicester the right to a slate roof because the quarries are closed, and if he can obtain slates of approximately the same colour and character from Wales, his æsthetic conscience is obviously justified. I will take another case. At Treborough, in the Quantocks, an admirable blue slate once was, but is no longer, quarried. The very existence of the old quarry, however, justifies Somerset as a county where slate is as appropriate as thatch or as the red Bridgwater tile.

Northamptonshire rejoices in the stone slates which come from Collyweston. These are thick and small and rough, rather more grey than the browner slates of Gloucestershire, but with the two colours beautifully and irregularly mingled. Unfortunately, they are rather costly. It would seem unreasonable, therefore, to deny to the Northamptonshire man the use of one of those Welsh slates which show a strong rusty stain. There is no need to plead the cause of the slate quarries of Cornwall, Argyll, Perth, Westmorland and Cumberland, for they are so essentially slate counties that their traditions are impregnable. It would be absurd to say that local building customs are only rightly observed when the materials come from the immediate locality. If salvation is to be found only in so strait a dogma, the critic would be found condemning half the mediæval builders of England, who fetched Caen stone in enormous quantities from France. There

105.—THE PORCH.

106.—HALL AND STAIRS.

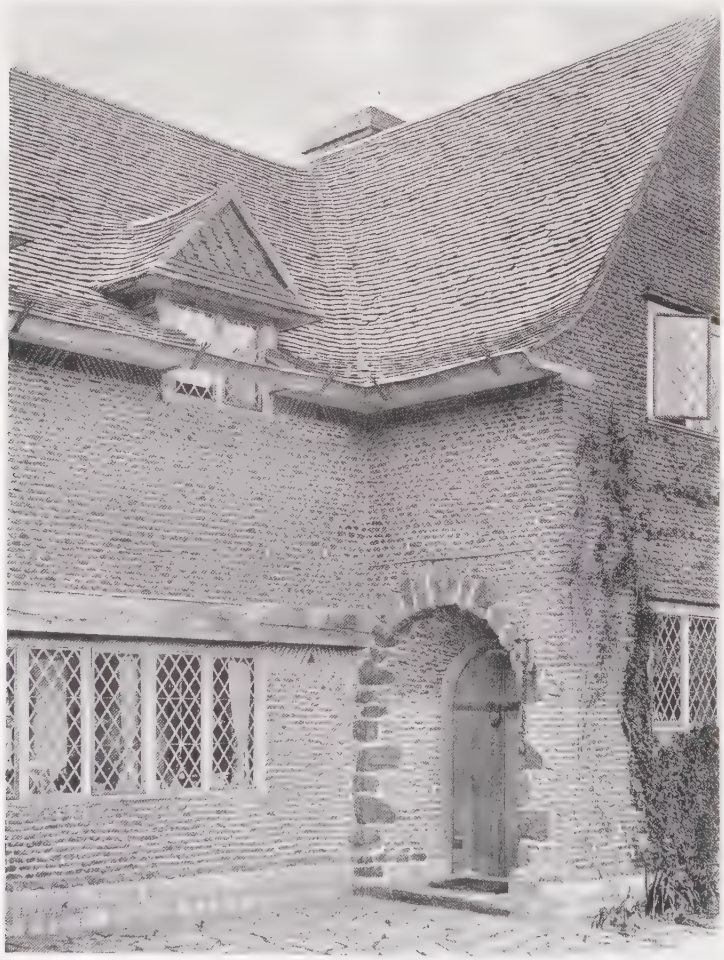
remains the question of colour. We do not say, as did æsthetic persons in the eighteenth century, that red roofs set the landscape in a flame; but there are many house designs, especially those providing unusually large areas of roof, which look unduly staring when translated into bright expanses of red

tile. Grey tiles are very hard to come by, and if a county where such a design is to be carried out can show any authentic use of slates, he would be a rigid purist who denied the right to their employment. In the Cotswolds, happily, the local product can still be had at not too great a cost for local use, but in other districts which once quarried slate, but do so no longer, the Welsh slate may find its proper place, provided always that it is right in colour, texture and size. Fortunately, quarry owners are now recognising the unwisdom of thrusting upon unwilling architects slates of abnormal thinness, smoothness and dimensions, and it is safe to prophesy for their better products an increasing use. This will be acceptable to the critic—but he will ask that the broad geological principle outlined above shall be observed in practice.

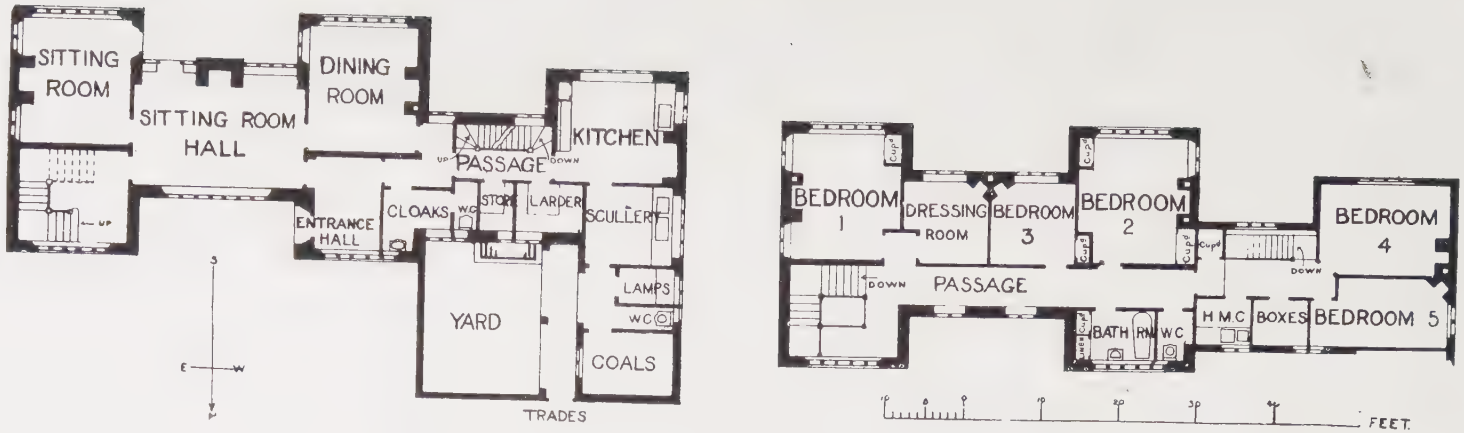
CHAPTER XIV.—GREYFRIARS, TILFORD, SURREY.

Mr. Turner Powell's Skill in Traditional Design—Mrs. Meynell on Flower Patterning—William Morris and his School—The Reaction from Pattern.

GREYFRIARS is a good example of the skill which Mr. Turner Powell brings to traditional building. The walls are of little pieces of local ironstone, set in straight courses with wide mortar joints, and there is a base course of large blocks of the same stone with garretted joints. The roof is covered with tiles of a rich red, and there are moderate touches of tile building here and there in the walls. A word must also be given to the arrangements for the disposition of rain water. Both the gutters and the down pipes are built up of oak boards, which have a far more interesting and solid effect than the usual things made of thin cast iron. The grouping of the house with the garage is markedly picturesque, and the garden has been laid out well. There is one point about which two opinions may justly be held. The carriage drive leads only to the garage, and does not approach the front door, which must be reached by a paved path. A good deal of emphasis is laid by some people on the importance of stepping from a carriage right into the house, but it does not seem an absolute necessity in the country. After all,



107.—THE ENTRANCE.



108.—GROUND AND FIRST FLOOR PLANS.

109.—HOUSE AND GARAGE FROM THE NORTH-WEST.

it is a matter of taste and habit. On the north front of the house is laid out, as Fig. 111 shows, a large square of turf placed diagonally with reference to the north side, and surrounded by broad paths of random paving. As the house is conceived frankly in a farmhouse manner, this paving looks well and reasonable: it does not lie open to the charge of affectation which may fairly be brought when it is used in conjunction with a house design of a classical sort. The whole effect of the exterior is the more attractive by reason of its warm colouring; the rusty purple tone of the ironstone in particular looks delightful against the green background of the garden.

110.—TWO BRICK FIREPLACES.

Within the house the architectural treatment follows very simple lines. The plastering on the walls and ceilings is left with a rough uneven finish, and the fireplaces (Fig. 110) are built up of brick or rough fragments of stone, the brick in many cases being waxed to a dark and pleasant hue. The walls everywhere are left white, and give an air of freshness.

If sometimes the modern tendency to leave the interior of a house wholly white and patternless becomes a thought too austere, it is at least better than what Mrs. Meynell called "the obsession of man by the flower." We can now see the early days of William Morris and his work—his very great work—somewhat in the perspective of history. Already a room decorated in the most vigorous days of Morris, and untouched since, takes on an air almost of old fashion. This is said in no disrespect, because things old-fashioned to-day become the cult of to-morrow, and the pride of the sale-room the day after. No one with perception can doubt that the best of Morris work, whether in fabric or printing, has that quality which will make it abide and will in time set it above fashion. Meanwhile it is just so much *demodé* that we can look at it with a somewhat

111.—ENTRANCE FRONT.

112.—SOUTH SIDE

coldly critical eye. Morris found the decorative world, in the words he used at the Great Exhibition, "all wonderfully ugly." The patterns in particular were banal and meaningless, based on no grace of line and on no authentic policy of æsthetics. Furnished himself with a boundless, even a volcanic inventiveness, he ransacked artistic history for old and credible motifs, and invested them with a new character which stamps them as fresh creations. It was precisely his fury of invention that drove him to replace bad pattern by good pattern rather than by no pattern at all. The flower, albeit a reasonable and conventional growth constrained within right decorative limits, continued its ascendancy. What Mrs. Meynell said harshly of the pre-Morris flower remained partly true of its chastened successor: "The floor flourishes with blossoms adust. . . . What is this bossiness around the grate but some blunt, black-leaded garland? . . ." For the time the flower has ceased to obsess. We may find it in a chintz here or a wallpaper

113.—BEDROOM FIREPLACE.

114.—THE SITTING HALL.

there, but there is an economy of patterns, and it is used only as a rare foil against large plain surfaces of carpet, curtain or wall. If it is not too impertinent to judge a giant like Morris, the fault in his schemes was in the multiplicity of the patternings, carpets, walls, curtains, coverings, all beautiful in themselves, but bringing a certain

restlessness by their neighbourhood. Mrs. Meynell, with her usual acuteness of perception, helps to clear the ground. "Nor can the prodigality of the meadows in May be quoted in dispute. For Nature has something even more severe than moderation; she has an innumerable singleness. Her buttercup meadows are not prodigal; they show multitude but not multiplicity, and multiplicity is exactly the disgrace of decoration." *Disgrace* is a hard word, but not too bitter for a decorative idea which cheapens the beauty of well patterned things. It was said of a man of profuse mind that "he made even learning vulgar," and the same judgment is true of good patterns too variously massed. The maximum of decorative interest is to be won by a just balance between patterned and plain surfaces. We are no longer hypnotised by the pleasure of rightly designed fabrics, as was the school of Morris; we have entered into a good inheritance and are in danger even of forgetting our debts. The danger of massing different patterns from the mere joy of their novelty and variety is past, but it will be a new misfortune if we forget the use of pattern and succumb to a tame reliance on flat colours or even on no colours at all. Ornament is, or should be, the outcome of a natural gaiety and pleasure in decoration, which can scarcely be expressed by the universal flatness and whiteness that have become popular. Meanwhile those who have tired of pattern will do well to remember the wheel of fashion, and to lay up their fine Morris fabrics in respectful lavender against the days when they also will have attained the sanctity of old masters.

CHAPTER XV.—THE CLOISTERS, REGENT'S PARK.

A Walk with Mr. Elmes—Regent's Park and Rural Architecture Mr. Baillie Scott on "The Craftsman or Romantic House"—and how it rambles and dissembles—The Middle Ages tempered by Bath Taps.

READERS who may feel outraged at the inclusion in a book on rural domestic architecture of a London house should skip this chapter, but if they have a taste for the humours of architectural contrast, they may take a walk northwards from Oxford Circus to the North Gate of Regent's Park by way of the western curve of the Outer Circle, and consider the houses of Avenue Road and Elsworthy Road. Just such a tour was made by James Elmes, Wren's biographer and the author, in 1827, of "Metropolitan Improvements." Elmes assured the then King George that "the splendid and useful improvements that had been effected in this metropolis, under your Majesty's auspices, will render the name of George the Fourth as illustrious in the British Annals as that of Augustus in those of Rome."

115.—THE PORCH.

The walk takes us past the work of many famous men: some houses in Portland Place designed by the Brothers Adam; Foley House, built for himself by their imitator James Wyatt; Nash's Church of All Souls', Langham Place—its spire surely an epitome of architectural compromise—terraces within the Park by Nash and Decimus Burton; and, since changed out of knowledge by Sir Edwin Lutyens, Hanover Lodge, where Admiral Beatty has succeeded another famous sailor, the tenth Earl of Dundonald. For nearly all these Mr. Elmes had great praise,

116.—ENTRANCE FRONT TO ROAD.

117.—GARDEN FRONT.

though he found Sussex Place "whimsical" and "entitled to no commendation on the ground of pure style," but yielding "an assemblage of picturesque outlines which diversify the scene and prevent a monotony of effect which might otherwise have been tedious." Hanover Terrace seemed to him more "grammatical," and he is loud in praise of "the beauty and scholastic regularity" of Decimus Burton's Cornwall Terrace. Elmes is lyrical always about the Orders, Corinthian, Ilyssus Ionic and the rest, but when he gets away from the stately terraces to the rural beauties of the untouched Park he talks for all the world as though he had foreseen Mr. Baillie Scott.

118.—THE HALL.

"In such a place as this, nothing like a town house should be allowed to insinuate its brazen face. No Grosvenor Square mansion, nor Grecianized sugarhouse, should be skirted by emerald lawns, like those about us. Nor, as the animated author of 'Sayings and Doings' says, should 'an upright villa, with a flight of steps leading up to the door, with a round weedy pond on a lawn, looking like a basin of green pease soup on a card table,' be allowed to contaminate the hallowed place.

"A rural style of architecture should alone preponderate in a spot of such polished rurality as this before us. A house in full puff, or a mansion in a court-cut coat and bag wig, would be as preposterous, among the green fields and gay plantations of the Regent's Park, as my friend Dashwood himself would be in his full bottomed wig and silk gown, following the Leicestershire fox hounds, breast high among the sportsmen. In this paradise of rural charms, the architect who would compose his design in accordance with the natural beauties of the surrounding scenery should say with the poet, before he commences his sketch,

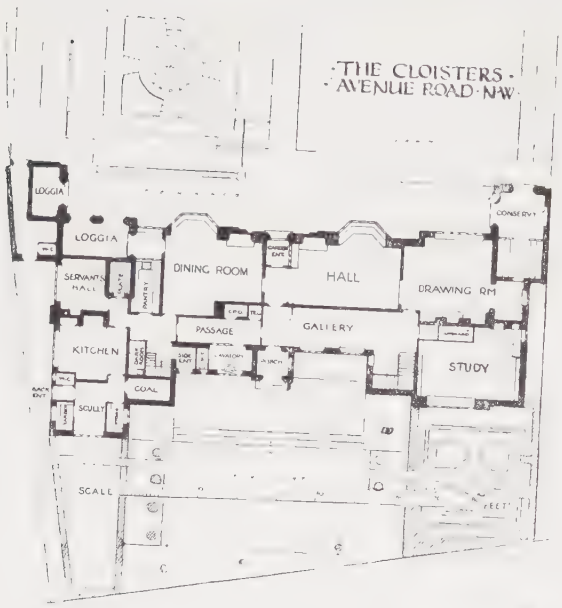
"To me more dear, congenial to my heart
One nature charm, than all the gloss of art.

"Were comfort my aim, in composing a fit dwelling for my friend, in the very best part of the park, it should be a cottage, an English cottage, not, as Dr. Johnson defines it, 'a low mean house in the country,' but a genuine English cottage in the vicinity of the metropolis."

119.—DINING-ROOM.

The shade of Mr. James Elmes has been compelled to wait about ninety years, but he must surely be pleased with the "polished rurality" of Avenue Road, where Tudor cottages smile upon Charles II mansions and Queen Anne plays her demure part. We have turned our backs on the chaste cement and paint of Regent's Park and inhabit a village glowing with brick of every shade of red and purple. Barren controversy as to the spirit which should inform town architecture may be evaded by the assumption that the interposition of Regent's Park makes St. John's Wood a village today as it was, in some sort, when Elmes took his walks abroad.

120.—A BEDROOM.



121.—GROUND FLOOR PLAN.

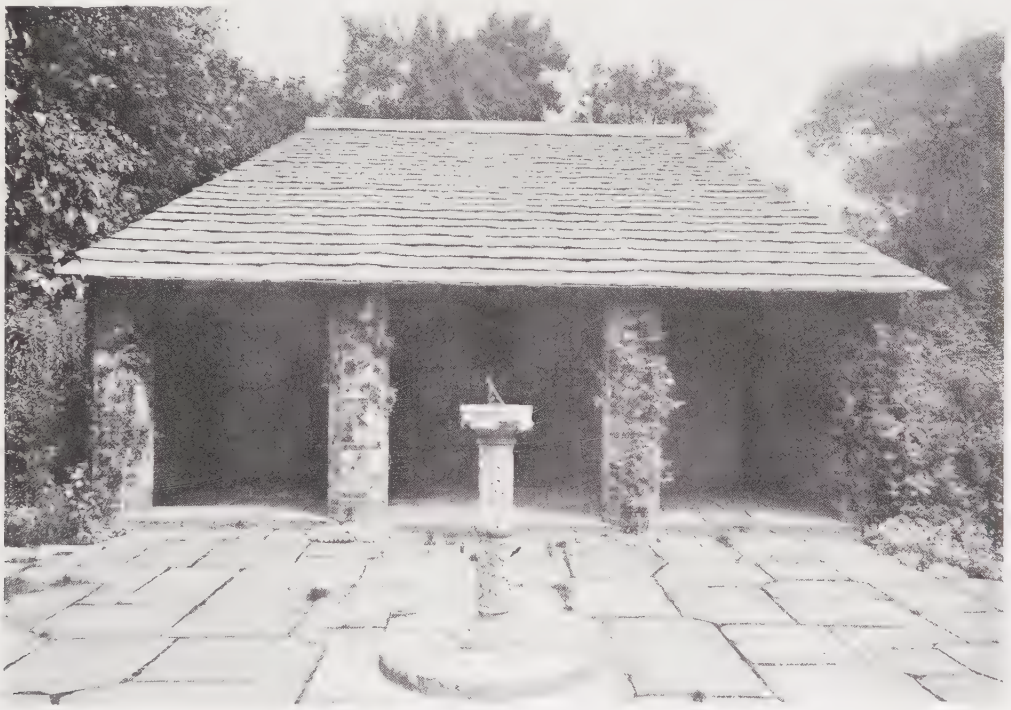
On that assumption the house Mr. Baillie Scott has designed for Sir Boverton Redwood is a complete fulfilment of the country ideal, and, what is more important, a faithful presentment of the architect's own gospel. For Mr. Baillie Scott will have nothing to do with "the scholar or classic house," and calls aloud for "the craftsman or romantic house." In the Cantor lectures of 1915 he put his case in persuasive words:

"The main quality of the craftsman building is that it is elastic and accommodating. Windows and doors can be placed where they are wanted and the whole effect is natural, unaffected and homely. It kindles the imagination, and is full of the mysterious charm of romance. The classic house represents a statement complete and finite. It is

122.—THE LIBRARY.

a conscious piece of art which has been definitely arranged from the outside—not the natural outcome of internal requirements. It seems to challenge our regard and demand our homage. There is no escape from the insistence of its façades. But the craftsman house is more subtle in its appeal. It is casual; it rambles and dissembles; and only when we have entered the wide, low doorway, and become steeped in the deep and silent influences which breathe from its walls, do we begin to realise the potency of its charm."

It is a little shocking that the honest Mr. Baillie Scott should approve of a house that "dissembles." And he says elsewhere that "in the Renaissance building, beauty is only skin deep; structure is everywhere concealed



123.—GARDEN ROOM AT END OF PERGOLA.

by superficial casings, walls and ceilings are coated with plaster. . . ." Yet, as Figs. 119 and 120 attest, the dining-room at The Cloisters is "superficially cased" with panelling from floor to ceiling, and a bedroom has its ceiling "coated with plaster." But it is more to the purpose to appeal to Mr. Baillie Scott's works than to his words, for they show none of the uncertainties which are inherent in architectural argument. He prefers the "romantic craftsman" sort of house, because it represents to him the outlook on life which he prefers. For that reason, and because he is an able architect with a sense of fitness and a gift for the picturesque, he makes his work credible and authentic. The type presents difficulties which drive other architects, less well equipped, into anachronisms

and affectations. But by the same token another type of mind works better on classical lines. Symmetry, subtlety of proportion and reserve are qualities which have as just a place in architecture as in life. If a man's mind works that way, they will find expression in a fashion which commends itself to others like-minded. Neither Mr. Baillie Scott nor the purveyor of Neo-Grec is wrong. There is room for both of them because the world is large and art is free. Bad romanticism is very turgid; bad classicism is very dreary; both are probably insincere: the first disgusts, the latter bores. It may be left at that.

124.—IN THE GARDEN.

It is more important to examine whether Mr. Baillie Scott makes good, by his own work, the claims he advances for the sort of work he likes to do. The Cloisters is a good answer. It is modest and restful in outline, very delightful in colour, convenient in plan, and is set in a delightful garden. Regarded as an exercise in the craftsman manner, it is as good a house as could be devised. No one can pass its pretty paved forecourt without recognising it as a building of notable character. It represents Mr. Baillie Scott to admiration, and that is half the battle. No doubt it also represents the pleasure of possession felt by its owner, Sir Boverton Redwood, who can shut his door, entrenched in the Middle Ages tempered by bath taps (h. and c.) and electric light. Sir Boverton has a world-wide reputation as an expert in liquid fuel, and represents one of the most modern developments of industrial enterprise. As to whether The Cloisters represents *him* and his contribution to civilisation as well as it represents Mr. Baillie Scott's devotion to the spirit of mediæval craftsmanship is one of those difficult questions which it would be impertinent to explore.

CHAPTER XVI.—FELDEN BARNS, BOVINGDON.

Mr. H. P. G. Maule's Compromise between Irregular and Symmetrical Planning—Treillage and Slotes—The Workmen's Share in the House—Carlyle on Craftsmanship.

THERE are few districts within a twenty-five mile radius of London affording more attractive sites for houses than Boxmoor and its neighbourhood. The wide downs, the great elevation above the sea and the keen air combine to make the conditions ideal. Joined with the delights of rural surroundings, unpolluted as yet by the suburban touch, are the practical advantages of a widespread public water supply, etc. Mr. Maule was fortunate in the site which he chose for his own home. South of the spot where the house is set is a little dell surrounded by a circle of five big trees. It was originally a pit from which chalk was dug to be spread on the fields, and it will

125.—ENTRANCE FRONT FROM NORTH.

readily lend itself to future treatment as a little sunk and paved garden. The position of the building was dictated by the desire to get this feature on the axial line of the south-east loggia. The plan of the house is a pleasing and ingenious compromise between the demands of symmetrical treatment on the south side and a practical elasticity of planning which led to an irregular modelling of the entrance front. The keynote of the downstairs accommodation is the large central hall or living-room, with dining and drawing rooms on either side and a

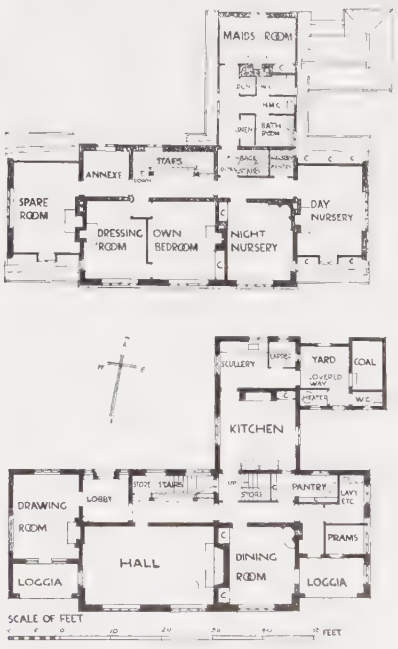
126.—THE SOUTH SIDE.

loggia connected with each of the latter. Fig. 129 shows the big living-room, which is treated in a simple, traditional manner with heavy beams showing on the ceiling, and a big open fireplace of brick. The planning of the south-east corner is particularly practical. It is a very short distance from the kitchen to the dining-room, and the adjoining loggia, used for all meals during many months of the year, is so placed that serving can be done not only through the dining-room, but by an independent passage running behind it to the loggia. The drawing-room is planned so that visitors have access to it direct from the front lobby without

going into the hall, where the family lives. The first-floor rooms are well disposed, and there are admirable attic rooms in the roof. The site was flat, and a good base was given to the house by raising the paved terrace about nine inches above the garden level on the south side.

Mr. Maule has employed a very practical method of securing a simple treillage screen of a rather rustic sort, which can just be seen in the left-hand corner of Fig. 126. The trellis panels are the work of a hurdler. They are made of cleft ash, 6ft. by 6ft., and cost only two shillings apiece. These panels are fixed between posts 6ft. apart, and connected with the top by rough rails which bear the delightful local name of "slotes." A device which I do not remember to have seen before was employed by Mr. Maule as a stimulus to the interest of the workmen. Built into the wall in casual and inconspicuous places are bottle ends into which have been pushed little printed labels bearing the names of the particular workmen employed, the master bricklayer, the master plumber, and so forth. The promise that they would be awarded this little touch of immortality did wonders in securing their steady devotion to carrying out the work in

127.—FIRST FLOOR CORRIDOR.



128.—PLANS.

the best way, and it was a kindly as well as adroit method of ensuring their interest. It is obvious that no amount of fine craftsmanship will save a house from æsthetic failure if the design itself is wrong, but by the same token the best design will take a disappointing shape if the workmen do not translate it faithfully with a right handling of the materials.

Not so many years ago, architectural fashion was apt to lay an undue stress on the craftsman and to look to him wholly for architectural salvation. The present tendency is to lay less emphasis on this aspect of building,

129.—HALL LIVING ROOM.

but it is to be hoped that we shall not forget how large a place the artisan has filled in the story of civilisation. This point was never put better than by Thomas Carlyle: "Laws themselves, political constitutions are not our Life, but only the House in which our Life is led; nay, they are but the bare walls of the house, all whose essential furniture, the inventions and traditions and daily habits that regulate and support our existence, are the work not of Dracos and Hampdens, but of Phœnician mariners, of Italian masons and Saxon metallurgists, of philosophers, alchymists and prophets and all the long-forgotten train of artists

and artisans ; who from the first have been jointly teaching us to think and how to act, how to rule over spiritual and over physical Nature. Well may we say that of our History the more important part is lost without recovery ; and—as thanksgivings were wont to be offered 'for unrecognised mercies'—look with reverence into the dark untenanted places of the Past, where, in formless oblivion, our chief benefactors, with all their sedulous endeavours, but not with the fruit of these, lie entombed."

130 —TERRACE FROM THE WEST.

CHAPTER XVII.—SPYWAYS, HARTFIELD, SUSSEX.

The Word of the Eye-Witness—Mr. Harold Begbie takes up the Parable—How Mr. Morley Horder solved his Problems—Life without Servants—Labour-Saving Devices—A Little Oratory.

IF indulgent readers can be found to say that anything in this book or its forerunners has helped them at all to an understanding of the problems and possibilities of the small country house, it must be in virtue of one fact—that I have seen the thing of which I write. It would be unbecoming in me to belittle the value of photographs and plans, but they necessarily show only a few aspects of a building, and they sometimes fail to suggest its most notable characteristics. I have tried, therefore, to express the outstanding quality of each house or the impression it left on my mind after visiting it, without always setting down any very exact description.

But in the case of Spyways, although I had a hand in its inception, urgent preoccupations elsewhere prevented my seeing it, and I therefore have borrowed from my friend Mr. Harold Begbie his own description of his own possession. What follows is his impression of what a house ought to be and how Spyways has fulfilled his demands.

H. B. *loquitur :*

" I know not whether it is presumptuous or platitudinous to begin with the assertion that here is a house with a thesis. Every house that was ever built, like every piece of needlework or every dish of cookery, started with a thesis. This is to say that each house is the logical expression of its architect's idea of the beautiful, so far as that idea can be expressed with the limiting inconveniences of providing lodgings for those who propose to dwell within it.

131.—FORECOURT FROM ENTRANCE.

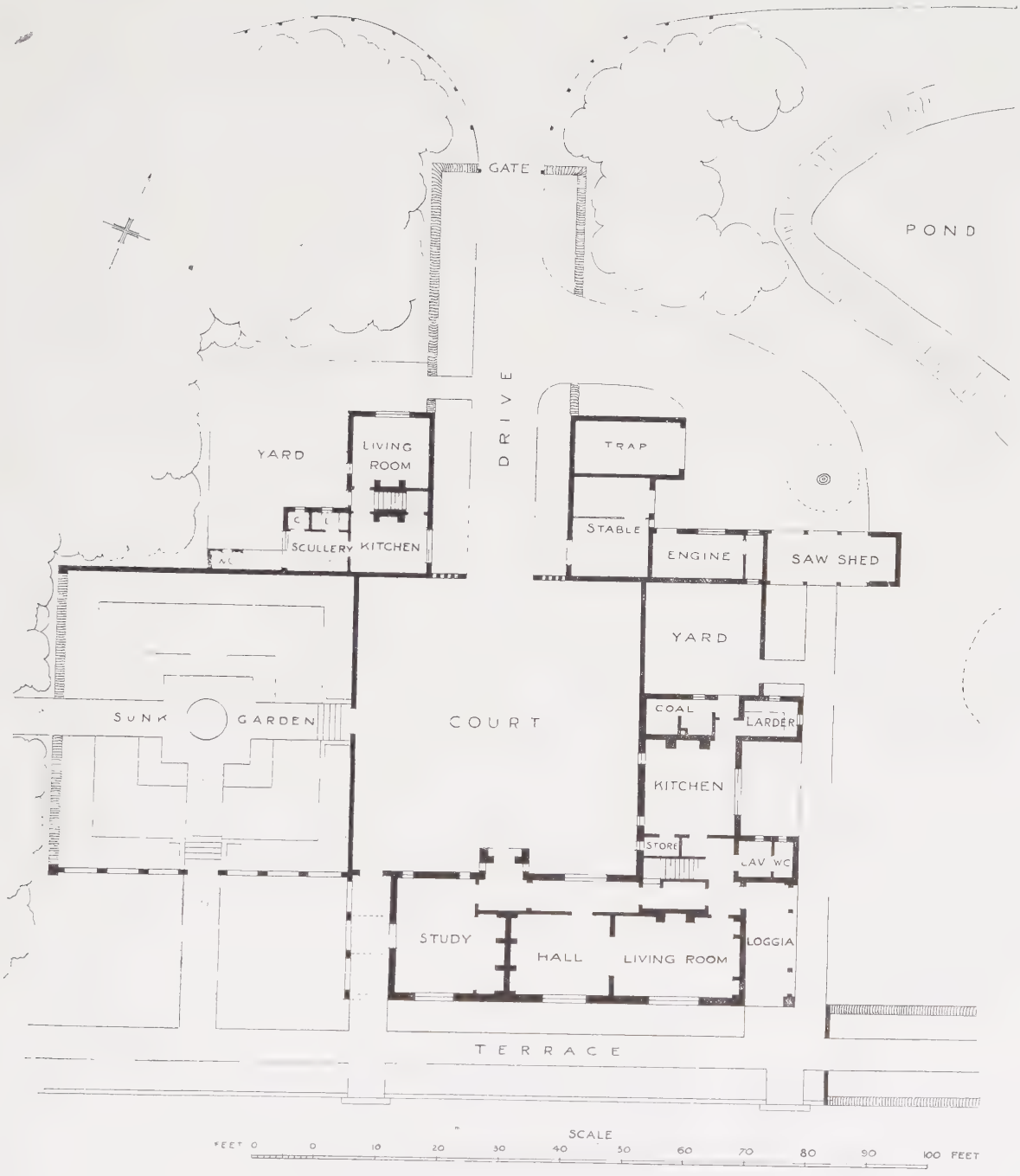
132.—FROM THE EAST.

133.—ENTRANCE FRONT AND FORECOURT FROM SOUTH LAWN.

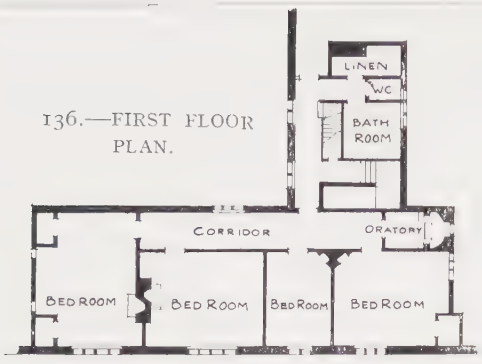
But this is not the thesis I have in my mind. It is clean contrary to my nature that I should appear challenging and aggressive; but it is essential to the welfare of future architecture and to the kingdom of domestic life that I should run the risk of being taken for a vain fellow. Spyways, in a thoroughly presumptuous fashion, *is* a house with a thesis. Let me explain.

134.—LOOKING INTO FORECOURT FROM ROAD.

"In building a house I set myself to solve the most unpleasant problem of domestic life and to realise a delusion common to many people, namely, that one's income is some 80 per cent. more than is shown in the banker's ledger. I determined in this first venture with bricks and mortar that I would so build my house that servants should be reduced to an exiguous minimum, if not entirely *stamped out*, and that in making my toilet I should every day have the pleasant sensation of a millionaire. It is curious that instead of laughing me to scorn for this staggering ambition, my friends merely uttered a remark which every man who sets about making himself a house shall surely hear till the very edge of doom, namely, that fools build houses. . . . I am so tired of it that I really cannot bring myself to write the everlasting words.



135.· GROUND FLOOR PLAN.



136.—FIRST FLOOR PLAN.

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

"No one said to me: 'How can Lazarus build for himself the house of Dives?' or 'How shall the Overdrawn inhabit the dwelling place of the Supertaxed?' No one, until I encountered my first architect, breathed upon the beautiful iridescent bubble of my dream. The thing was said to be excellent in theory, was declared to be the most admirable and practical ambition, an innovation which every sane person in the United Kingdom must watch with the very greatest sympathy; but—fools build houses...

"My architect said: 'It will cost a lot of money.' I retorted that it was a part of my thesis, as well as an integral factor of my financial position, that it should *not* cost a lot of money. He suggested leaving out the fixed basins in the bedrooms. I replied that hot and cold water laid on in bedrooms killed a housemaid. 'Do you think,' he enquired, 'that central heating is a *vital* necessity?' 'Can you imagine the Ritz-Carlton in New York without it?' was my rejoinder. 'Very well,' he said, heaving a sigh; 'it must be the electric plant: cut that out, and perhaps——' 'My dear sir,' I made answer, 'I have lived in a house of lamps; I know how the reek of an oil lamp can destroy the whole beauty of a summer night; I refuse to let the ladies of my family risk their place in my affections by attempting to trim so recalcitrant a piece of cotton as a lamp-wick; therefore, you will be so good as *not* to cut out the electric plant.'

137.—ORATORY DOOR ON LANDING.

"The end of it was that, having caught my architect by ensnaring his soul in the exquisite beauty of my site, I succeeded in persuading him to make the heart-breaking attempt of building a cottager's palace for an exceedingly small sum of money. 'Let there be,' I said, 'as great an exterior simplicity as befits a Sussex cottage, but let there be within such conveniences and servant-dispensing luxuries as shall make life delicious and smooth and joyous for them that dwell therein.'

"Admirably did Mr. Morley Horder succeed in bodying forth this ideal thesis; and since the outbreak of war the ladies of

my family gave it life. We lived for more than three years without one servant in the two attics. I admit that a delightful charwoman from the village . . . But the servants had departed *pro patria*.

"Everything in this house is on a small scale, except its happiness. The dining-room is scarcely as big as her ladyship's morning-room, and as for the hall or drawing-room, it is no more spacious than De Quincey's parlour. The study, because it has to house so great a population of authors, is of somewhat ambitious dimensions for a cottage. These three rooms all in a line form the ground floor of Spyways, and above them are three bedrooms and a dressing-room. Above these bedrooms again, with their dormer windows sitting in the tiled roof like two birds on their nests, are the attics.

"Thus, to begin with, you have the domestic life of the establishment all knit together and of one body. At right angles from this compact little house-to-itself stands the department of utility: below, on the ground floor, the kitchen and larders and cloak-room; above, on the first floor, the bath-room, the hot-air cupboard, the box-room and the store-cupboard. Utility has a wing to itself.

"It is a part of the attraction of this house that, small as it is, the stairs are no way visible from the corridor on the ground floor till you come upon them tucked away between walls at the far end from the front door. You look clean down this tiled corridor to a long garden door, through whose panes of glass you catch the beams of the loggia, the glimmering of a green lawn, the leafy boughs of an oak, and the twinkle of water. In each of the bedrooms there is a basin fixed to the wall with hot and cold water laid on, and with a waste-pipe to carry far afield the result of one's delightful ablutions. In this way so atrocious a thing as a slop-pail does not dare to rattle its tin handle under the roof of Spyways.

138.—THE ORATORY.

"Among the other labour-saving devices employed in Spyways may be mentioned: electric light, made by a little oil engine, this same engine turning a circular saw which cuts up wood for the fires; radiators in both corridors and rooms, saving fires in the bedrooms and keeping the house evenly heated throughout; a plug in each room for a vacuum cleaner. The whole of the housework

is light, agreeable and intelligent. But there is nothing Benthamite in this cottage. It does not strike you as a freak-house, or as the utilitarian contrivance of a crank. Indeed, it is only by living in it and taking part in its ritual that you become aware of its ingratiating conveniences. You discover Bentham hiding under the draperies of William Morris. To the casual visitor it is an extremely pretty cottage and nothing more.

"You enter by a field gate, and passing between a gardener's cottage on one side and a garage on the other, these two buildings perfectly balancing, you enter a walled court of just sufficient dimensions to admit of a small car sweeping round,

139.—HALL TO DINING-ROOM.

with a quick jerk of the wheel, to the hooded door. All these buildings and walls are of a mixed brick, ranging in colour from a maiden's blush to a coal-heaver's black eye; there is, in consequence, no deadness of surface, no sense of machine-made monotony, as you approach the house, and with lavender in the borders of the court and ceanothus on the walls there is a feeling that these pretty bricks are clothed and comfortable. The tiles are hand-made, of an old-brown colour, and the chimneys reach up to the sky with a sense of their own dignity.

"Inside you find red tiles on the floor, and plain plastered walls. This whiteness of wall is relieved by doors painted an apple green, by the draperies of the

windows, by the pictures and the flowers. The three sitting-rooms have large open fires and friendly mantelpieces of putty-coloured Sussex stone topped with a shelf of oak; on these open hearths nothing is burned but wood, which gives a pleasant smell to the visitor as he enters the house. The window-sills, to save painting, are of slate. The mouldings are simple and appropriate. The wainscot is green like the doors.

"On the upper floor there is one thing very beautiful and gracious, of which I shall say little, except that it seems good to me there should be such altars in the homes of all mankind. This little altar is a memorial to a child, and is in the

140.—FROM THE SOUTH.

form of an oratory. It has a leather door studded with copper nails and decorated with an open gilt cross, through which is seen a lovely window by the late Mr. Bonner, a window of which the prevailing colours are deep blues and crimson. Within there are always flowers in the brass vases on the table, and a lamp burning on certain anniversaries. . . .

"You see nothing of the view as you approach the house, and might think that you had come to ordinary Sussex scenery until from the rooms you look out of the casement windows. You then perceive that Spyways stands on a hill, that this hill slopes at an amiable angle down to a valley some half a mile away, and that this umbrageous valley, where you rightly suspect a stream to be

chanting its *laudamus* through the trees, rises leisurely and gigantically up on the other side, stretching away for a good ten miles of uninterrupted vision, to splendid hills thick with lovely woods and wild with ancient forest.

" Round the walls of Spyways there is a marginal beauty of roses and lawns, yew hedges and brick paths, a pond and a nut walk—a little garden which creates love and drains the purse the more one seeks to render it superlative. But its real setting is the splendour of woods and forest, and of great rolling hills high against the blue sky.

" Here, on its green hill, sits modest little Spyways containing, like a box of tools, all the contrivances of modern science, believing with becoming humility that it has solved the servant problem, and looking towards the eternal hills with a sure faith in the goodness of life and the reward of simplicity."

CHAPTER XVIII. — A HOUSE AT LONG WITTENHAM, BERKSHIRE.

A Note on the Thames Valley — Concerning Aspects for Houses — Mr. Guy Dawber's Views—Loggia facing North-West— A Wood-Panelled Ceiling.

THERE is a curious superstition with regard to the Thames Valley, the origin of which it is difficult to imagine. It is quite widely held that it is in some especial manner damp and relaxing. It is true that in certain parts of its course, where the banks are very low and bordered by flat fields, the aftermath of the floods which occur at intervals of some years does not conduce to health.

It seems absurd, however, to condemn a great stretch of otherwise beautiful and healthy country because of the vagaries of an occasional wet season. When all is said, London itself, one of the healthiest cities in the world, has hardly any of its area as much as 50ft. above sea level. No one thinks or speaks of London as being damp or depressing, yet the unfortunate Thames Valley above it is subjected to all manner of criticism, much of it quite unreasonable.

These notes are occasioned by the contemplation of the village of Long Wittenham. The house which is now illustrated looks over the Thames, and is about 25ft. above ordinary

141.—THE WAY IN.

river level, but this means over 170ft. above sea level. This latter figure ought to be taken seriously into account by the people who talk about the low-lying Thames. So far from Long Wittenham, a typical Thames-side place, being damp and relaxing, its gardens suffer from drought, for the rain drifts away over the Berkshire Downs and misses the village. As, moreover, it has a gravel subsoil, the rain, when it does come, disappears like water poured into a sieve.

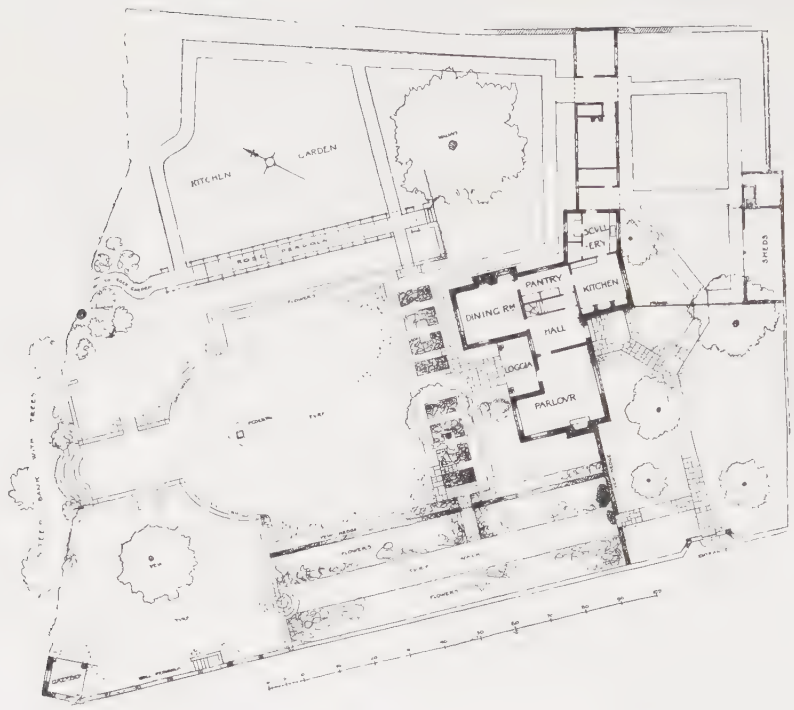
Another proof, if any were needed, is the absence of rheumatism and the like ailments in Long Wittenham and its neighbourhood. This is not a plea, however, for building close to the river-side and a few feet above its normal level. It is always wise to set a house well above the highest point which has ever been known to be touched by flood waters. Mr. E. Guy Dawber was fortunate in the site with which he had to deal. There was a large plateau, bounded on the south-east side by a narrow lane and on the north-west side by a bank sloping down steeply towards the river. The stream divided here to enclose a large eyot. Part of it has been cleared of its osiers to form a tennis lawn, and for the remainder of its width a broad path has been cut to give a clear vista to the further stream. Needless to say, the eyot has given many delightful opportunities for water gardening. The placing of the house on its site presented certain problems. The ordinary practice nowadays, and, in the main, a sound one, is to make the principal garden front face south, south-east or south-west. In this case the splendid open views across the river valley dictated a north-west aspect. Moreover, some splendid old trees existed

142.—LOGGIA.

143.—ENTRANCE DOOR FROM THE SOUTH.

which it would have been sacrilege to disturb, and that involved a plan (Fig. 145) which might be thought unduly straggling were it not explained. In effect, the trees have been used as the main features of separate little courts all round the house. We enter from the lane through an attractive gateway with something of the character of a lych-gate, whence a path paved with square flags, and (when I visited Long Wittenham) bordered gaily with rosy larkspurs, leads to the entrance door. A hall of adequate size opens into a large parlour (Fig. 149) lighted on every side except the north-east, and therefore offering every hospitality to sunshine. The loggia is naturally placed so as to command the vista across the garden to the river, and faces north-west. The usual aspect for an outdoor room is something with south in it, but Mr. Dawber claims that a touch of north is much more valuable, as a narrow south loggia is apt to become unbearably hot in the summer. By means of projecting the dining-room, a south-west, as well as a north-west, window is secured for it. These rooms are attractively treated. The parlour has a plaster ceiling reticently modelled with ornament in low relief. The dining-room (Fig. 150) is more unusual, but no less successful.

144.—THE GARDEN FROM THE HALL WINDOW.



145. GROUND PLAN.

The ceiling is panelled in wood and painted a cloudy green, which contrasts well with the white walls. The garden plan (Fig. 145) shows a simple and effective treatment. There is a turf walk between herbaceous borders, running north-westwards from a break in the forecourt wall and leading to an enclosure which terminates at the western corner

146. FROM THE WEST.

147.—GARDEN AND ROSE PERGOLA FROM SOUTH-EAST.

148.—PERGOLATED WALL AND GAZEBO.

149.—THE PARLOUR.

150.—DINING-ROOM.

with a gazebo (Fig. 148). This part of the site is divided from the narrow lane outside by a stone wall, furnished at intervals with masonry piers and finished at the top by poles and cross-pieces in the manner of a rustic pergola.

The north-east corner of the garden is occupied by kitchen beds, and these are divided from the lawn by a long arched treillage pergola (Fig. 147) which not only gives hospitality to roses, but serves the practical purpose of breaking the force both of the east and west winds. Altogether, Mr. Dawber has designed a holiday retreat, as simply and pleasantly equipped within doors and without as a lover of the Thames Valley could desire.

CHAPTER XIX.—SHORNE HILL, TOTTON, HANTS.

External Influences on English Buildings — The Late Ernest Willmott's Use of South African Traditions—and his Success—Dutch Colonial Shaped Gables—Plastered Pergola Columns.

THERE will always be difference of opinion as to how far external influences should be allowed to affect English building. The idea that local traditions should be followed is sound in principle, but becomes an unreasonable check on invention and variety if driven too far. Pressed to its logical conclusion, it would exclude all Renaissance motifs, and throw us back on the affected mediævalism which possessed, and in due time destroyed, the Gothic revival of last century. Although the character of the Renaissance has become so closely interwoven with English building that nothing appears more wholly national than, say, the simpler domestic work of Inigo Jones and Wren, it developed from the hospitality given to imported ideas. If Great Britain were a self-contained country instead of being the head of a great Empire, a narrow devotion to its vernacular arts would have the air of reasonableness; but it would be foolish to reject any ideas which may flow to us from our own people in other lands, provided always that they are appropriate to our landscape, climate and social usages. It would be absurd, for every reason, for a returning Anglo-Indian to reproduce in this country

151.—ENTRANCE FRONT FROM NORTH-EAST.

152. FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.

the type of house which has been evolved to suit the Briton in a tropical climate; but to anyone returning from South Africa the same considerations do not apply. It is natural, moreover, that a man who has lived much of his life in South Africa and leaves it with some regrets should desire to be reminded of old associations. This was the case at Shorne Hill. The late Ernest Willmott, whose premature death robbed us of a faithful artist, was peculiarly qualified to give fitting architectural expression to this feeling. He had worked for some years with Mr. Herbert Baker, whose abilities and services to colonial architecture are widely known. Although the house is markedly South African in character, this has been

153.—THE WEST SIDE.

154.—FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.

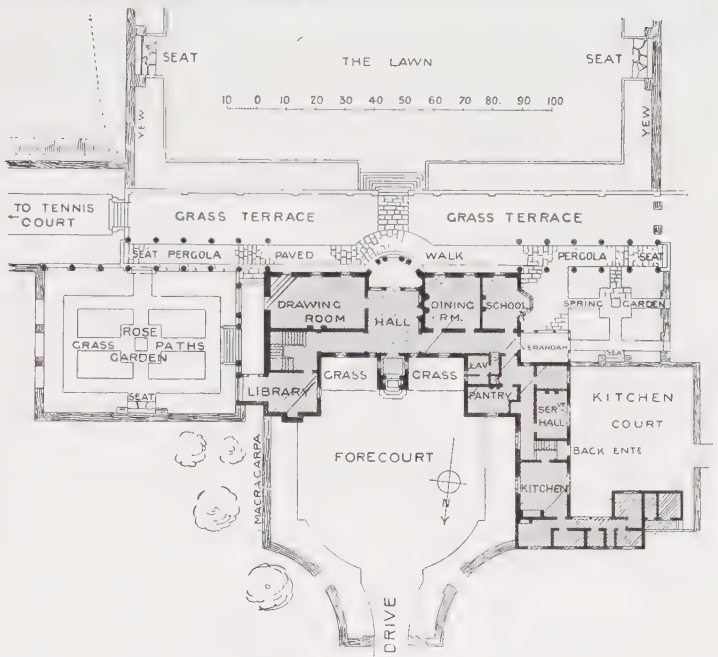
achieved without any violence to the unity between plan and elevation which is essential to sound design. The tradition of colonial architecture which Mr. Baker did so much to re-establish was necessarily Dutch in origin, but modified by the warmer climate of the Cape and new social conditions. In transplanting to Hampshire such features as would remind his client of his old home, Willmott wisely did not follow the South African type of plan, which belonged to the Colony only and was not of the essence of the original Dutch tradition.

155.—THE PERGOLA: LOOKING WESTWARD.

Shorne Hill therefore stands as a happy compromise in architectural principle, and is charming in its own right. The colonial accent is chiefly to be noticed in the tall gable with its curved pediment over the garden porch and the broken gable of the entrance porch. Though the "Mansard" outlines of the main gable ends, taken in conjunction with these features, add somewhat to the unfamiliar treatment of the house, there is ample English authority for their use, as is mentioned in another chapter. They are a usual and delightful element in hundreds of typically English buildings. Not far from Totton, on the right-hand side of the main road from Fareham to Chichester, there is as beautiful a barn as can be imagined. Its Mansard roof is of just the same outline as the main gables at Shorne Hill, and is wonderfully gilt with a rich growth of moss.

The village of Totton, near Southampton, on the Salisbury road, is markedly unattractive, but Shorne Hill is set back a mile or so on rising ground, and is bowered in trees. We drive through a wood carpeted with bracken into a forecourt enclosed by hedges. On the right is the block of servants' quarters, with a

kitchen court on the west side. A broad corridor runs along the north side, and the hall and all sitting-rooms have a south aspect, except the library, which looks over to the rose garden on the east. Passing through the hall to the garden porch, we note the South African influence in the beautiful pergolas which, running along the terrace, bind the east and west gardens to the house. Round columns, white and smooth plastered like the house itself, support an open roof of stout oak timbers (Figs. 155 and 157). When I saw the house in July,



156.—PLAN.

157.—UNDER THE PERGOLA.

1912, the pergolas were blazing with roses. If the South African sun makes the vine with its luxuriant leafage a more useful plant for pergolas, the colour of English roses is more valuable in our northern clime. An attractive vista is secured between the east and west pergolas along a paved walk, its joints gay with lowly growths. The western pergola leads to a pretty

spring garden roughly paved, which is sheltered wholly from east winds and partly from the north. From the grass terrace steps lead down to a lawn enclosed by yew hedges, which are making rapid growth. Altogether, Shorne Hill is a good example of how a characteristic type of design which is not native may take its place in a quiet and convincing way in surroundings typically English.

158.—THE GARDEN PORCH

CHAPTER XX.—THE SMALL HOUSE, LAVANT, SUSSEX.

Professor Prior's Straightforward Outlook on Architecture—Plan emphasised by Elevations—Two Sleeping Balconies—The Public Arts of the Future.

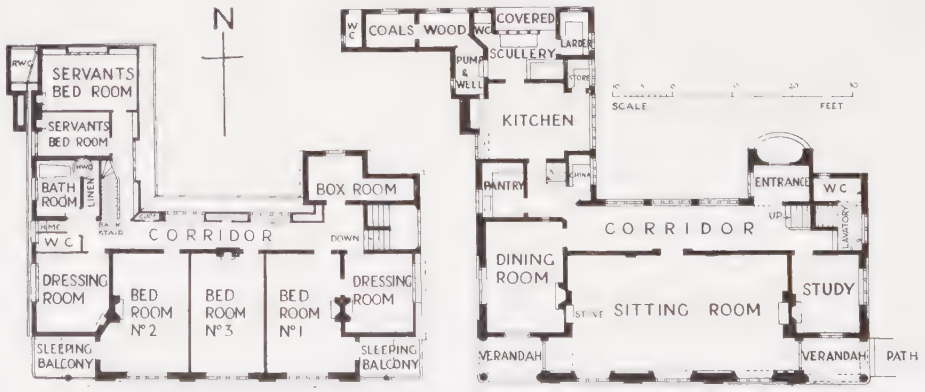
THIS house at Lavant, designed for Mr. and Mrs. Peyton Mackeson, is characteristic in its simple way of the outlook on his art that distinguishes the holder of the Slade Professorship at Cambridge. The materials have been used in a straightforward manner without reference to those infirmities of modern practice which are called "styles." The house is simple without being *gauche*, and refined without obtruding airs of scholarship. Above all, its exterior is exactly expressive of its planning, always an admirable feature and one that can be contrived when a vernacular manner of building is followed. With a symmetrical house it is almost impossible for the elevations to mark in any way the dispositions or character of the rooms, for a drawing-room window may, for example, exactly balance a kitchen window. In a building like The Small House, Lavant, on the other hand, it is possible to lay a clear external emphasis on the important rooms. The plan is simply laid down (Fig. 161). The porch gives access to a wide corridor running east and west. From the middle of it opens the door to the big sitting-room, which is flanked by study and dining-room. At the south-east and south-west corners are verandahs with access from both these rooms and from the big room. As a result, the south front, with its three arched window openings and the two pillared loggias (Fig. 162) expresses the dominance of the big room. The subordination of the smaller rooms at the side is marked by their south outlooks being within the verandas, but

159.—THE PORCH.

160.—THE ENTRANCE FRONTS.

they are none the less well lighted by windows facing east and west respectively.

The aspects could not have been better allocated. The servants' offices are at the north-west corner. There is through ventilation and lighting in the kitchen, a practical merit which is often forgotten, and cannot always be contrived, and the serving passage between kitchen and dining-room is short and convenient. Upstairs the three chief bedrooms look south, and two of them have the merit of opening on to sleeping balconies



161.—PLANS.

(Figs. 163 and 165) set above the verandas. Venetian blinds are not, ordinarily, satisfactory things, but nothing better can be devised for such balconies, for they ensure privacy without hindering a full circulation of air. The two dressing-rooms are of ample size, and the servants' bedrooms are cut off well from the family quarters. The exterior of the house is treated pleasantly and unaffectedly. Some variety is given to the walling by the recessing of the window frames within arches, round below and segmental above.

Professor Prior, in one of his Cambridge lectures, asked the pertinent question: "Can art, can architecture, painting and sculpture be what they

162.—FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.

have been? The day of the cultured patron, to whom architecture gave a palace, and painting and sculpture a regal furniture, is surely over . . . private possession is growing stale, running into strange fads and queer expressions."

This is undoubtedly true of the palace and of the easel picture, and we may accept Professor Prior's happy vision of an external art—public to all—which is shaping itself as the art of the immediate future. If democracy is going to prove

itself capable of directing its energies to anything beyond material benefits, such as hygiene and technical education, a wide public art, visible in its town halls, its schools and its every street, must be the expression of its æsthetic activities. But in anything but a Socialistic State " private possession " will still give scope to the artist, and, to an increasing extent, in the house of moderate size.

The day of the private palace has probably gone, but the passion for ownership remains and is spread over the constantly increasing number of people who nourish connoisseurship in architecture, decoration and furniture. It is impossible, for example, to imagine the creation sixty years ago of a home like The Small House,

163.—FIRST FLOOR BALCONY.

Lavant, in which both architect and client were concerned to frame a house of moderate dimensions and simple equipment in an artistic fashion. Sixty years ago Philip Webb had not designed for William Morris that house, the red brick walls of which were such a violent innovation that no name more distinctive could be found than " The Red House."

Professor Prior has spoken of " the curious sudden uplift of a new creative style, when capacity in art expression passes from barbarous inefficiency to complete mastery, almost in a generation."

It is true that the bulk of domestic work to-day deserves the name of barbarity rather than of efficiency, but it is equally certain that there

164.—AT THE FOOT OF THE STAIR.

are hundreds of architects who can bring to their task of designing small houses qualities that fall little short of mastery. The problems are complicated and ways and means generally restricted, yet the results as shown, for example, in this book are something of which the architects of the last twenty years and their clients may well be proud.

165.—THE SOUTH-EAST CORNER.

CHAPTER XXI.—HURTWOOD EDGE, EWHURST, SURREY.

The Rural Italian Style—James Elmes on Villas—Professor Kerr on Disquieted Architecture—Mr. Arthur Bolton's Successful Translation of the Italian Villa.

THE frequenter of bookstalls or of the humbler and more promiscuous street-barrow who chances upon some extinct picture-book of the Englishman's house is nearly certain to find one section of its designs headed "Rural Italian." He may well wonder who evolved that plausible title for a building emancipated from the sway of the classical Orders. At first sight it may be referred to the instantaneous success of the Travellers' Club in 1831. Sir Charles Barry, freeing himself from the Grecian surroundings of his own time and of his own earlier work, found a new point of departure in the astylar palaces of the Florentine school which he had studied in Rome as well as in Florence. The repetition of his idea without character or refinement has so vulgarised it that some imagination is required to realise its original merit.

166. THE SOUTH SIDE.

A reference to Thomas Shepherd's drawings of London in the nineteenth century, published in 1827 with letterpress by James Elmes, will show that of ten plates of villas, practically all are adaptations of the Greek Orders to small houses. Elmes discourses on villas with a gusto which shows that he evidently considered them to be a novelty. "Neither Campbell, Ware, Brettingham, Wren or Vanbrugh," he alleges, "accomplished a villa." "A villa, as generally understood in the present day, is a rural mansion or retreat for wealthy men." Of the character of the villa he writes: "A rural style of architecture should alone preponderate in a spot of such polished rurality as this before us"—*i.e.*, Regent's Park in 1827! There are, however, books that show the tendency beginning

167.—THE TOWER FROM SOUTH-EAST.

earlier. Gandy, an architect and A.R.A., shows in his "Rural Architect," published in 1806, a weak design "In the Italian style."

The keynote struck by Barry was followed all over the country. The rural Italian duly appears among Professor Kerr's queer samples of styles which he thought fit to tender for the choice of the English gentleman when bent on house-building. This is how he describes it: "Rural Italian, in fact, was the direct descendant of the Palladian: it was the Palladian revised, rationalised, simplified, reduced to common-sense and everyday wants, and so re-accepted. Its preferableness over the Elizabethan lay chiefly in its complete and legitimate employment of the more refined classical detail. . . . Mediævalism was wholly absent,

irregularity and free treatment could be had without restraint and, at the same time, without departure from that accustomed system of detail with which, as detail, no dissatisfaction had ever been felt." To read this is to feel that Rural Italian was, indeed, dead, and that Kerr's unconscious epitaph is only too characteristic of 1865.

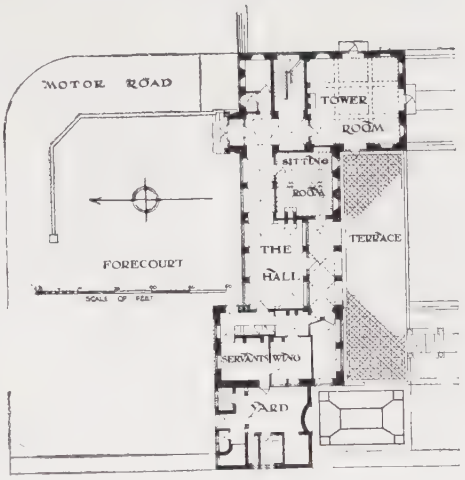
When the Professor descends to greater detail he warns us that "an objectionable affectation of irregularity is not altogether wanting in some of our Italian villas." He excels himself, however, on the question of site. "That kind of site for which the best Rural Italian style is especially suitable is the modestly picturesque. For a more *disquieted* landscape, the mode of treatment must be *correspondingly disquieted*; but the style may suffer if this goes beyond a certain limit, and for a perfectly placid flat situation all that is necessary is to moderate irregularity, or even dispense with it entirely."

168.—IN THE HALL.

169.—MOTOR ENTRANCE (BELOW) AND FRONT DOOR (ABOVE).

The vogue of the Italian villa in England in the generation that preceded the rise of Norman Shaw, Eden Nesfield and Philip Webb was so great that it is difficult to avoid moralising over the causes of its decay. It certainly was somewhat over-ripe when Kerr patronised it so heavily. The leading reason is to be found precisely in the fact that it was not Rural Italian at all. Its designers were not free from the classic beau-ideal, which meant for them an impossible marble-like perfection of execution, and misplaced refinement. In the absence of real materials, everything lapsed into the plasterer's hands, and the marbling artist

and the grainer lurked together in the background. Kerr said of graining that it was "one of the most charming and useful species of common-sense art ever contrived in the world." Plasterer and marbler together effected amazing travesties of the work of more happy lands and summer skies.



170.—GROUND FLOOR PLAN

So much by way of preface to the consideration of Hurtwood Edge, a house which owes its form to the desire of its builder to have an Italian villa on the Surrey hills. A question to Mr. Arthur Bolton as to the lines on which he set about so unusual a task brought the answer that his Italian wanderings had given him fresh impressions of the origins of Palladian motifs. From these studies arose a new conception of what an Anglo-Italian villa should be. As will be seen from the photographs, Mr. Bolton has not hesitated to go back to a style of execution both Italian and native. In point of fact, the Italian villa, even of the days of Palladio, consists simply of the farm buildings of the country, grouped systematically about the house. In the great days of Rome the "Patron della casa" did not hesitate to retail his own wine and produce on the ground floor of his imposing town mansion. In like manner the later Venetian noble of the mainland territory had no objection to long ranges of cart-sheds and cow-stalls lining his forecourt. Thus the Orders were shaped from the brick pillars that carried the roof beams, and the portico developed from the cart-shed of the Italian farm. Here was the Tuscan Order in its earliest form.

171.—THE TOWER ROOM.

If anything would infuse life into the decayed tradition of the Italian villa in

England, it would be the wholesome Tuscan character of Hurtwood Edge. The planning meets the complicated demands of modern life, which persist even during a week-end's retirement. The old powder closet is revived in the form of toilet rooms with fitted basins, which open from the bedrooms, but are separated from them and separately lit and ventilated. Practical requirements have been squarely faced and met, and the designer has had the courage to follow English ideas in the height of the rooms. He rejected the fantasy of the *piano nobile* and all that it implied in the bastard saloon.

172.—IN THE LOGGIA.

The walls of Hurtwood are built of the local sandstone as it came from the quarry on the hillside. They are quoined and banded with red tiles, either a foot or nine inches square, with an effect that is quite Roman. It is a mistake to suppose that only the mediæval builders were alive to the value of natural masonry. The false ideal of fine ashlar can only end in plaster for the majority of buildings, and in the decay in workmanship that so all-concealing a material has too often involved. The landscape on Pitch Hill is "disquieted" enough to alarm Professor Kerr: but the architect has wisely refrained from the Kerr dictum that the building was to be correspondingly "disquieted." From the distant as well as the near view, the house sits well on its difficult site, and may be said to "nestle high 'mid tufted trees." The top stage of the tower provides a domed library surrounded by open passages in the thickness of the walls, which overhang for this purpose on three sides. The glorious view across the wide-spread plain, over Horsham towards the Brighton Downs, with the crown of Chanctonbury rising on the horizon, cannot fail to captivate the spectator. A drawing-room, about twenty-four feet square, occupies the ground floor of the tower. Beneath it, in a basement

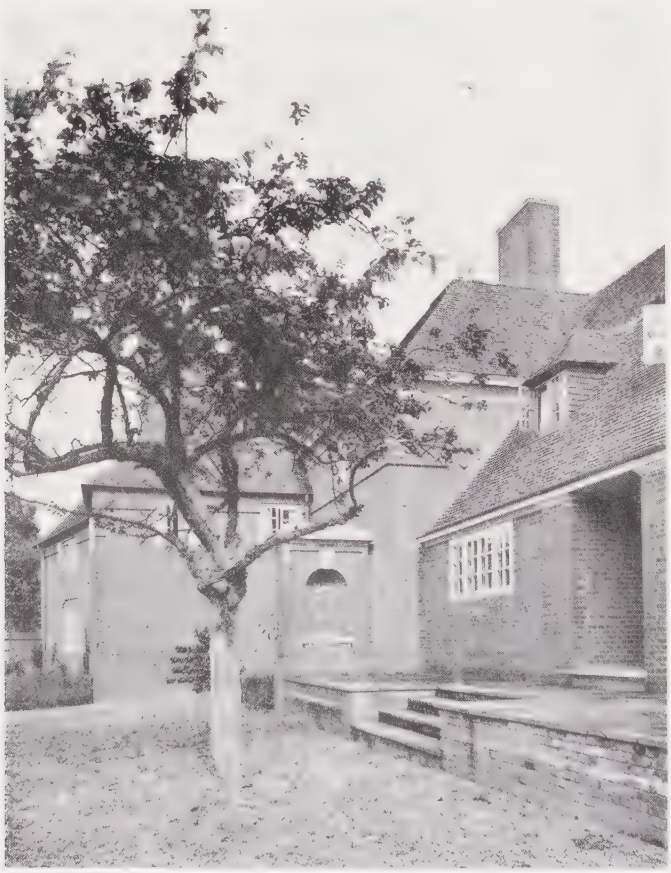
provided by the sharp fall of the site, is the motor house. In front of the latter is an interesting rubble vaulted grotto, really pleasant and fresh, a garden temple humanised. The entrance porch in two storeys is the central feature of an effective forecourt. Fig. 169 shows the different levels of the forecourt with its porch, and of the drive down to the motor house. The main terrace is of noble width, and forms an intimate part of the house design (Fig. 173). From the terrace a recessed loggia of three bays leads into the lunetted dining-hall. From there a cross-vaulted corridor brings us to the entrance vestibule and staircase. In the hands of an architect less intimate with the underlying qualities of Italian design, and less appreciative of its points of contact with English vernacular architecture, Hurtwood Edge might easily have been a failure. As it is, the Italian feeling is apparent without being insistent, and the house takes its place pleasantly in a landscape typically English. The garden has been richly planted in an Italian fashion, which gives an ideal setting to the house; but this has been done since the accompanying pictures were taken. The site slopes so sharply that later attempts to give satisfactory pictures of the garden have failed to capture its charm, and I have perforce to be content to show the house alone.

173.—THE TERRACE.

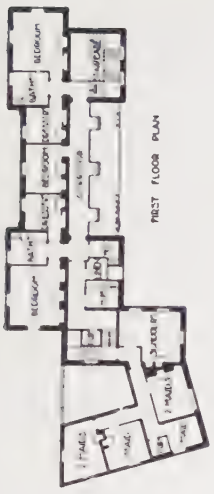
CHAPTER XXII.—HILL END, PRESTON, HERTS.

Our Architectural Debt to Italy—Expression of the Classical Spirit in Small Domestic Work—Carlyle's Comment on Wren—Sir Edwin Lutyens' Power of Mingling Repose with Variousness.

IF we seek to define the debt to Italy of our domestic building, we must look rather to the spirit than to the letter of Italian architecture. It is true that Sir Charles Barry introduced definite Italianate forms into his design, both of houses and gardens, with results that his commanding ability made feasible, but he had no authentic successors in the same manner. Now and again an English architect has gone direct to Italy for inspiration, as is seen in the last chapter. In the main, however, our architects accept the Italian tradition in the guise of English Palladian with the example of Inigo Jones's country houses and the less reasonable experiments of the Kent and Burlington school to illumine a difficult path. One of the most distinguished achievements in this manner in our own day is Heathcote, Ilkley, where Sir Edwin Lutyens handled the Palladian motif in a characteristically personal fashion. But our debt to Italy is far larger than can be summed by any catalogue of architectural features taken directly or absorbed indirectly from Italian models. It has to do with principles of design and is based ultimately on an intellectual attitude towards both art and



174.—PART OF ENTRANCE FRONT FROM SOUTH-WEST.



175.—GROUND AND FIRST FLOOR PLANS OF HILL END.

176.—GARDEN FRONT FROM THE SOUTH.

life. To the artists of the Italian Renaissance we owe the revival not merely of such classical forms as column and pediment, but of that restraint and balance which are the essence of the architecture of humanism.

The generic name of the architectural alphabets which they used, the Orders, reveals the nature of the neo-classic outlook. They engaged themselves not merely in an archæological reconstruction of the classical forms, which were intimately related in their minds with the revival of classical literature, but in a fresh intellectual concept of design based on order rather than on emotion. Romanesque and Gothic buildings were the unconscious developments of structural problems and took their spirit from the strivings of the Age of Faith. The architect of the Renaissance had no such unconsciousness. He saw the expression of order in the symmetry and subtle proportions of classical forms, and set out to create a new harmony by the adjustment of those forms to the building needs of his time. It is true that the restraint of the Quattrocento gave way in time to the extravagances of the Rococo in Italy and France, and of Chirrugieresque in Spain; but beneath these exaggerations of detail, and sometimes openly associated with them, was an underlaying restraint of form which showed where the power of the classical idea lay. In England this essential sobriety, joined with a tireless invention and a mastery of structural possibilities, gave us Wren. He remains so peculiarly the true English exponent of the classical idea that some humorists wish to adjust their spelling of the familiar word to Wrenaissance. Carlyle's oft quoted dictum, that he perceived Wren's Chelsea Hospital to be the work of a gentleman, remains one of the shrewdest comments on the classical spirit.

177.—FROM THE NORTH-EAST.

178.—THE SOUTH EAST SIDE.

It means the expression in terms of architecture of kindliness, serenity, humanism, sanity, and clear thinking—qualities which a building represents by directness of plan, true proportion, solidity, repose, modesty in ornament and a large masculinity.

If we measure a building by such standards as these it will readily be seen whether or not it was conceived in the spirit of order and restraint, or whether it relies on other qualities, admirable, it may be, but different in intent and expression.

Hill End, for example, makes no parade of classical forms, and the nature of the site and the relation of the house to the road indicated a ground plan not even purely symmetrical. But even in plan, if we except the service block to the north-east, the house is perfectly balanced on both its main elevations, and the garden side is a very just example of the spirit of classical repose in a composition possessing no definite classical features. It is Sir Edwin's happy gift to combine with such a decorous conception elements of variousness, such as the flanking walls to the little terrace on the entrance front with their attractive niches. His very difficulties are the occasion of new successes. To secure a proper disposition of the servants' quarters, and to arrange the north-east front so that it took up a proper alignment with the road, involved making the kitchen block and yard of an irregular shape. So admirably, however, is this part modelled that from no point of view is there any suggestion of distortion. The complete picture gives the impression that just so and no otherwise could Hill End have been built. The best art in any medium must always give the idea of being inevitable.

179.—FROM THE ROAD.

In the scheming of the rooms generally Sir Edwin has provided that every room in the house, with the exception of the schoolroom and the servants'

180.—ON THE SOUTH TERRACE.

181.—ENTRANCE FRONT.

quarters, shall have the sunny south-east aspect. It is impossible to give Hill End higher praise than to say that it is a little Temple Dinsley, of which it is a near neighbour. For all its modesty in actual size and accommodation it is informed with that quality of breadth and dignity which is of the essence of the classic spirit.

182.—THE STAIRCASE

CHAPTER XXIII.—RYSTWOOD HOUSE, FOREST ROW, SUSSEX.

The Result of a Competition won by Mr. Curtis Green—Axial Planinng—A Family House—The Georgian Note in our Georgian Day.

SET at the edge of Ryst Wood, Forest Row, and with the views from its windows sweeping wide across the Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Course southwards and eastwards to the higher forest land towards Hartfield, stands a house in which I take particular interest, because it was built from the first-prize design in a competition of which I drew up the conditions. Sir Edwin Lutyens, A.R.A., Mr. P. Morley Horder and myself were the judges of nearly two hundred designs submitted. In March, 1913, COUNTRY LIFE invited architects to submit designs in a competition for a Small Country House of a dignified sort, and offered prizes of £80, £40 and £20 for the designs placed first, second and third respectively. It was the most important architectural competition up to then instituted by a newspaper, not only on account of the size of the house, but also because the ideas expressed on paper were to stand the ordeal of being transformed into bricks and mortar on a site of unusual beauty. The first prize was awarded to Mr. W. Curtis Green, who was accordingly appointed architect for the carrying out of the work.

183.—THE SOUTH SIDE.

The materials used were of the best, and the technique of their employment might well serve as a model for country house work. The placing of the building on its site was conditioned by the presence of a chestnut

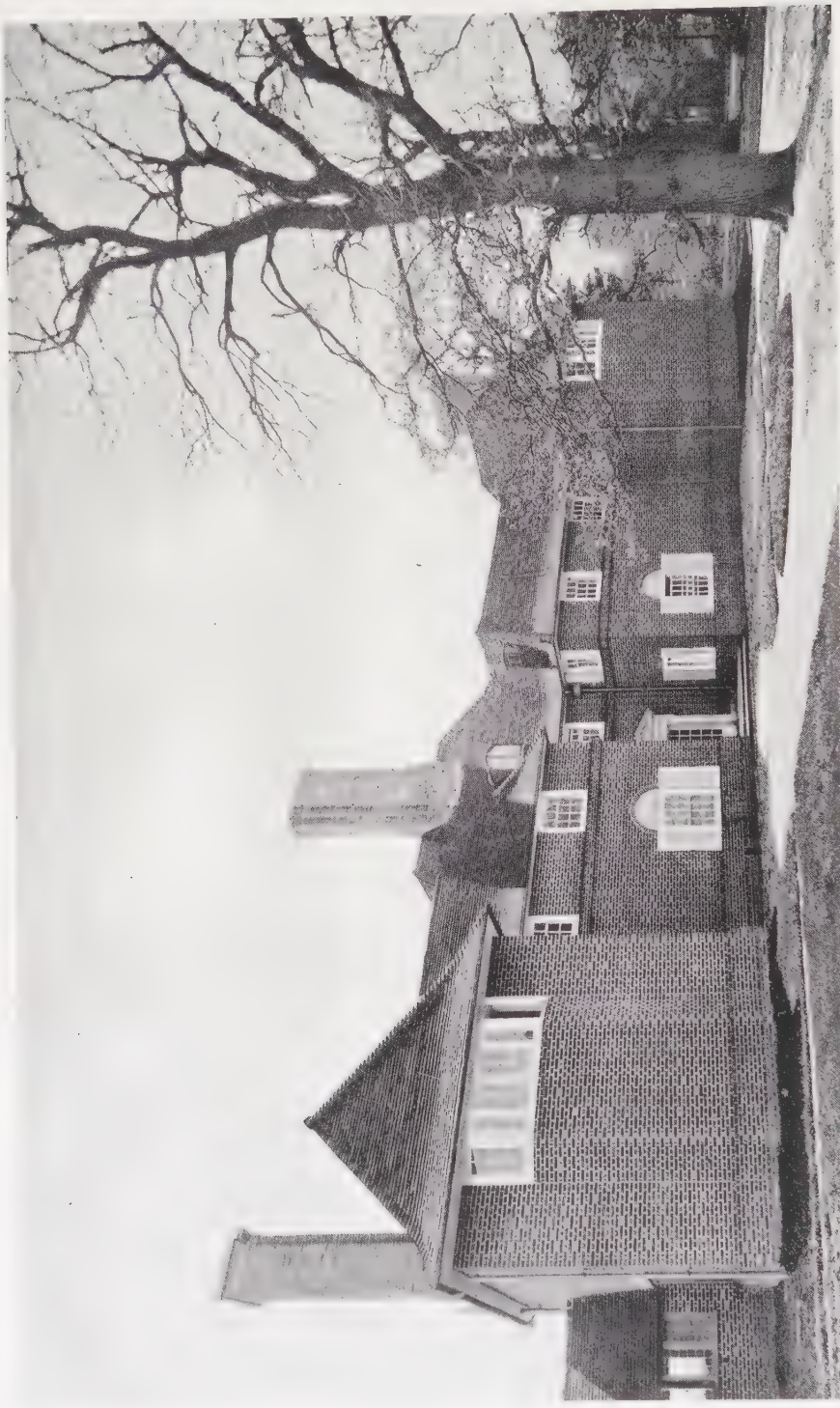
184.—THE COMPLETE NORTH FRONT.

tree, which determined the north and south axial line through the middle of the house. Fig. 184 shows this fine tree as the main feature of the entrance forecourt. Westward of the house is a group of oaks, which are seen well in Fig. 185 and continue the wooded note proper to a place which bears its name of Forest Row with faithfulness. The elevations of all fronts are reticent and dignified. They mark the growing adhesion of present day architecture to the ideas of solidity and symmetry rather than of a laboured picturesqueness. An admirable brick has been used for the walls, of a lively red interspersed with purple tones which give a surface of pleasant broken character.

185.—WEST FRONT.

An especial distinction is given to the design by the bold central chimney which is seen at its best in the detail of the middle of the north front (Fig. 186). The garden scheme outlined by Mr. Curtis Green (Fig. 188) has been carried out in part.

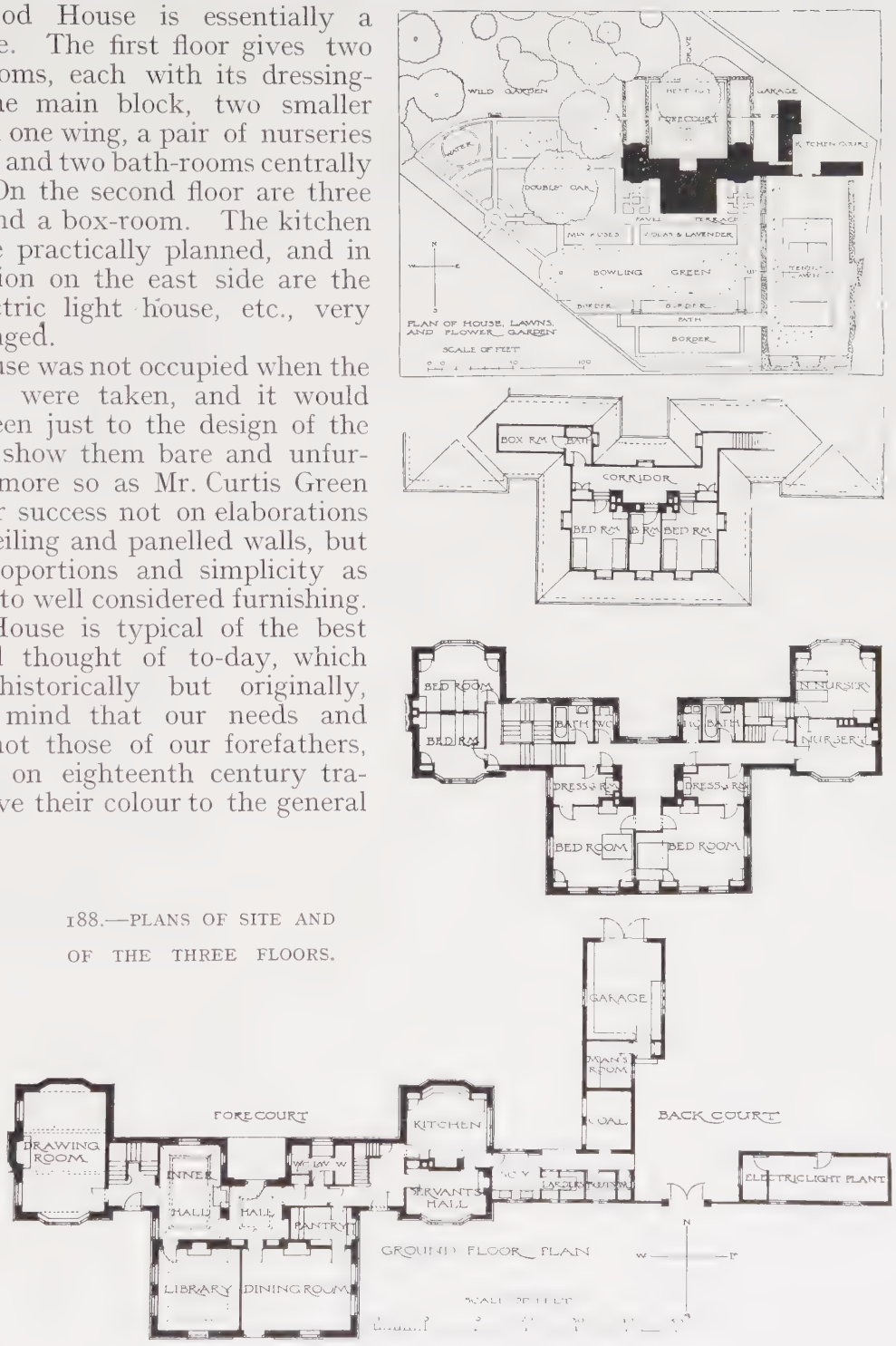
186. MIDDLE OF THE NORTH FRONT.



187.—ENTRANCE FRONT FROM NORTH-EAST.

Rystwood House is essentially a family house. The first floor gives two large bedrooms, each with its dressing-room, in the main block, two smaller bedrooms in one wing, a pair of nurseries in the other, and two bath-rooms centrally disposed. On the second floor are three bedrooms and a box-room. The kitchen quarters are practically planned, and in a low addition on the east side are the garage, electric light house, etc., very neatly arranged.

The house was not occupied when the photographs were taken, and it would not have been just to the design of the interiors to show them bare and unfurnished, the more so as Mr. Curtis Green has relied for success not on elaborations of plaster ceiling and panelled walls, but on good proportions and simplicity as background to well considered furnishing. Rystwood House is typical of the best architectural thought of to-day, which plans not historically but originally, bearing in mind that our needs and habits are not those of our forefathers, but relying on eighteenth century traditions to give their colour to the general form of the house. And this is at once good sense and good art, because in our Georgian day our mental attitude accords closely with that of our Georgian forefathers. We have abandoned



188.—PLANS OF SITE AND OF THE THREE FLOORS.

that imitative mediæval outlook adopted by our grandfathers with an enthusiasm which now seems almost hysterical. We are content with a saner humanism and recognise that the *ethos* of the Middle Ages or Tudor times is not to be recaptured by so simple a process as living in a house which pretends to be Gothic, either Early or Late.

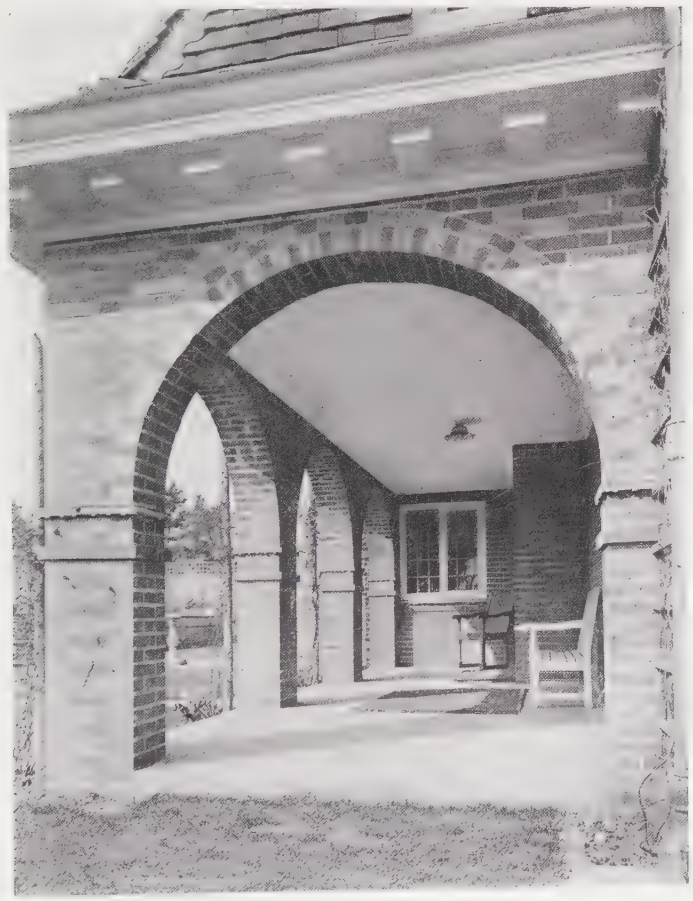
Respect for tradition is at the basis of good architecture, but let us be sure that in our eclecticism we follow a tradition which is in authentic sympathy with our outlook on life and manners.

189.—GARDEN FRONT FROM SOUTH-WEST.

CHAPTER XXIV.—BLYTHE COURT, EDGBASTON.

Birmingham's Tradition of Domestic Building—and Mr. Buckland as an Exponent of it—Placing of the Loggia—H. G. Wells on Order in Building—The Town-Planning Movement.

BIRMINGHAM owes its architects a debt for the high level of design achieved in its suburban houses. Mr. Herbert Buckland (of Messrs. Buckland and Farmer) has worked on the lines of the definite brick-building traditions which have happily taken a firm hold on local design. Blythe Court is particularly interesting and especially English, because it exhibits in its treatment the national characteristic of compromise. Modern house design follows, in the main, one of two tendencies. It relies either on irregular planning, with the rooms disposed solely with reference to convenience, and with picturesque elevations in which gables play a large part, or, at the other end of the scale, symmetrical planning governs the design, and the elevations take on the quiet eighteenth century characteristic which follows the substitution of hipped roofs for gabled ends. Mr. Buckland has adopted a quite unsymmetrical plan, but has achieved a restful effect by leaving broad expanses of plain brickwork and by hipping the roof throughout. The plan is conveniently contrived. Dining-room, drawing-room and what is pleasantly called the home-room open from an ample sitting hall. At the south-west corner of the house, and



190.—LOOKING INTO LOGGIA.

connected both with the home-room and the drawing-room, is a pillared loggia (Figs. 190 and 191). A more usual treatment of this feature is to place it in some definite relationship with the dining-room and kitchen, so that it may be available for open-air meals. In this case its distance from the working quarters of the house suggests that it would not be very practicable to serve there any more serious meal than afternoon tea. The subsidiary domestic offices are well arranged at the north end of the block in connection with the motor-house and covered shed. The plans reproduced (Fig. 195) sufficiently show the neat disposition of the bedroom floor. In Birmingham the local brick is particularly hard and sound. Indeed, there are few wall materials so satisfactory from the practical point of view. Until a few years ago, however, this quality of hardness extended to the appearance of the brick, which was, further, of a crude colour. The efforts of architects, however, have converted the brickmaking industry, and the material is now of a more attractive hue and

191.—LOGGIA FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.

192.—THE GARDEN SIDE.

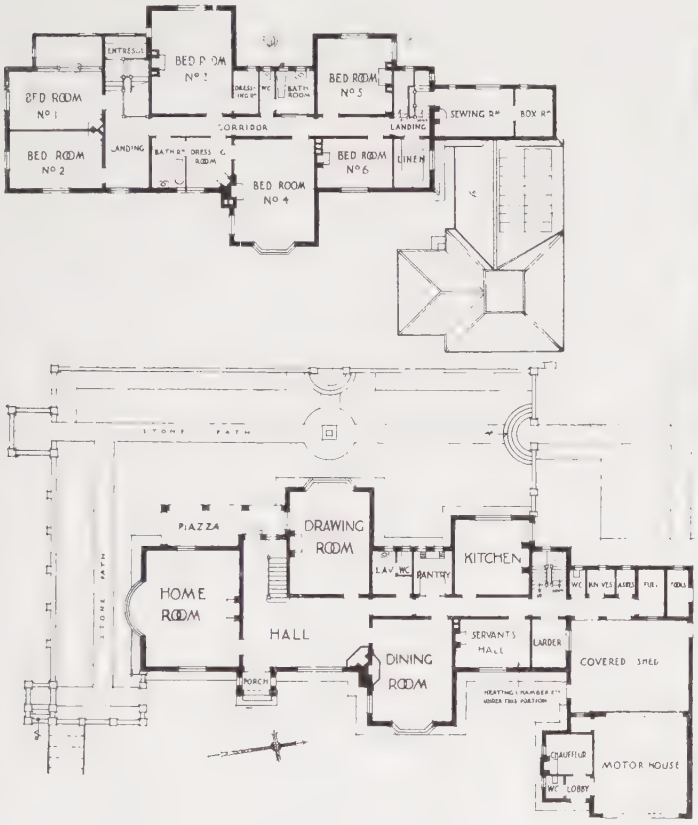
193.—ENTRANCE FRONT.

194. GARDEN FRONT FROM NORTH-WEST.

texture. It is still harder in appearance than a good South Country brick, but it is just that the local material should be allowed to show its natural characteristics.

If we look behind the incidents of carefully arranged quietudes of proportion, a house like Blythe Court reveals itself as the expression of order. It is difficult to appreciate exactly how any current movement will work out, but the tendency of the architecture of to-day is certainly towards an increasing reliance on orderly motives of design. They will develop slowly, because, as Mr. Wells says in *The New Machiavelli*, "I have always felt that order rebels against and struggles against disorder, that order has an uphill job, in experiments,

gardens, suburbs, everything alike." Architecture, if it owns any vitality at all, is an expression of its time, and, although our rapid social and political reconstruction will be accompanied by much disorder of idea and speech and some irregularity of deed, the aim seems steadily in the direction of order. If I may take up Mr. Wells' parable, it is wholly true that order has struggled hard against disorder in suburbs, which is to say in town-planning, and it is at least worth noting that the arrival of town-planning, as a recognised field of civic effort, coincided with a more orderly outlook on the principles of house-design. Whatever the merits as a



195.—PLANS.

196.—A FIREPLACE.

novel of *The New Machiavelli*, its second chapter gives the most convincing picture of the sprawling disorder and ugliness of Victorian building that has yet been written. The town-planning movement began in England with the garden suburb in industrial districts, and history will recognise the justice of this, for industrialism begot the hideous disorder which a new civic conscience has now to correct. And because the great revival in domestic architecture during the last fifty years was concerned mainly with the earlier traditions of English building, the prophets of town-planning were content at first to secure a spacious and hygienic setting for picturesque houses and cottages whose note was rather a

regulated disorder than order itself. This is to be noticed even in Birmingham where the pioneer work at Bournville is on less formal lines than in some of the most recent schemes, which were in hand before the war. We move quickly, however, and the future cry will be for schemes which follow outlines definitely orderly, and for individual buildings which express the same artistic motives. The best talents in architecture will be working on classical lines. That is not to say that a few will not keep the Gothic spirit alive against the time when there is a reaction towards the architecture of romance. Meanwhile the need is for order and more order, and for a steady purpose to prevent the new England from becoming a waste of unrelated buildings.

197.—THE HALL.

CHAPTER XXV.—RAVENSBURY MANOR, MITCHAM.

Mr. Percy Newton's New Work on an Ancient Site—Plan of House Dictated by River—Garden Treillage—The Word "Manor."

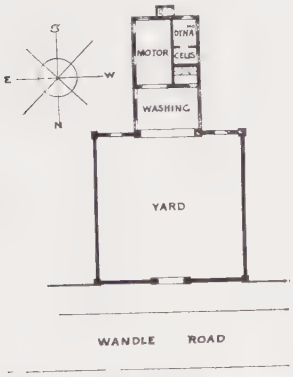
THERE can be few sites within a ten-mile radius of Charing Cross which present so many attractions as that of Ravensbury Manor. It has an air of seclusion altogether delightful, and the river Wandle meanders pleasantly through the grounds and stretches a backwater through tall trees. That the merits of the place have been appreciated for at least fifteen centuries is clear from the Anglo-Saxon finds which have been recorded by its owner, Captain Bidder, in the solemn pages of *Archæologia*. Seventy-seven graves were examined and yielded many typical objects which illustrate the art of the West Saxon inhabitants of Surrey.

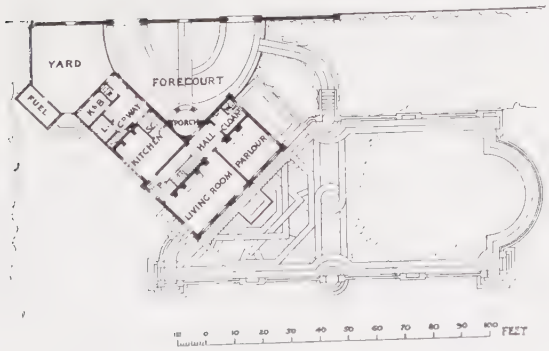
From the fifth century we must needs jump to the eighteenth, for by the river bank are the remains of the manor house of that period. Less than a century ago this was abandoned, doubtless because its construction was ill adapted to resist the floods to which the Wandle was addicted, and a new home was built some distance away on much higher ground. Such ruins as remain suggest that the old house had some pleasant characteristics. Captain Bidder,

198.—FROM THE WEST.

109.—ACROSS THE RIVER WANDLE.

appreciating the peculiar merits of the river-side, built his new house there, but on the opposite bank and on much higher ground. The unusual placing of the house with reference to the Wandle Road and the odd shape which the garden has taken were due to the desire to secure from the chief windows the pretty view along the course of the river. But for this, the architect, Mr. Percy Newton, would have set it parallel with road and river. The desire to utilise the highest point above water-level also made it needful to put the house very close to the road and to banish the motor-house to the far side of it. None the less, privacy has not been sacrificed, for an adequate wall divides the forecourt from the road, and no rooms of importance overlook that side. This is a case, however, where the exigencies of the site compel a disrespect of the usual practice with reference to sunny aspect. The living (and dining) room faces north-east and north-west, and the parlour north-west and south-west, by no means an ideal arrangement, but





200.—PLAN OF SITE AND GROUND FLOOR.

201.—AN ANGLE PORCH.

the best that could be done as things were. The plan generally marks Ravensbury Manor as a bachelor's home. The building is conceived in the quiet manner of the eighteenth century and is attractive, but it lies open to the criticism that height is over-emphasised

in proportion to width. On the north-west front is laid out a paved garden, from which the stable block with its lantern is seen to group well with the entrance gates. To divide this garden from the forecourt very good use has

202.—STABLES FROM PAVED GARDEN.

203.—REFLECTIONS.

been made of a treillage screen (Fig. 204), a feature of garden treatment which is employed too little. Surrounding the paved garden and marking it off from the meadow, above which it is raised, is an attractive balustrade, seen best in Fig. 199, which was photographed from the far bank of the Wandle. Advantage has been taken of the front door being at the internal angle made by the two wings of the house to provide an interesting dome-shaped porch (Fig. 201). The inside of the house is plainly treated save for the dining-room, where charming panelling is interspersed with big romantic landscapes by Stansfield, some in tempera and one in oil. It is impossible to exaggerate the value of giving to pictures a definite part in architectural treatment, instead of making them

204.—A TREILLAGE SCREEN.

205.—FROM THE ROAD.

excrescences in gilded frames which usually bear no decorative relation to their surroundings.

The word "manor," when applied to a small place, has a large sound which is inappropriate, and, moreover, it is usually meaningless. In this case the house is, in fact, the house of the manor, and, despite its modest extent, has a dignity which adds a certain fitness to the just use of the word. Mr. Newton has shown in the general scheme of the design a gift for overcoming the difficulties presented by a site of unusual character and hampering conditions.

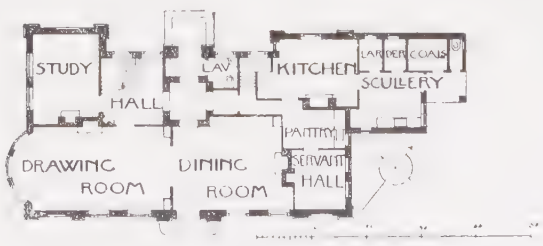
206.—IN THE DINING-ROOM

CHAPTER XXVI.—THREE BRICK HOUSES AT FARNHAM.

About Ready-made Houses—Speculative Builders—and Local Architects—Joseph Gandy on "Polish"—John Evelyn on Symmetry—Mr. Harold Falkner as Architect and Craftsman—Tile-Building—Danger of Fashions.

OF the houses illustrated in this book, I believe all were designed for a known client, except Costley's and Leigh House in this chapter. They may, therefore, represent in some particulars of their design personal wishes and pleasures. There are some which, in plan or treatment, express some idiosyncrasy removing them from ordinary categories. Such diversities may be interesting in themselves, and arise often enough from some condition of site or aspect rather than from odd views on arrangement or equipment held by architect or client. When, however, houses are built as a commercial enterprise, to let or sell on their general merits, there is no room for entertaining fancies in brick and mortar; straightforward planning and sane elevations are of the essence of the contract. A very encouraging feature of the best "speculative" houses built to-day is that architects of position are entrusted with their design. If this wise example were followed at all generally, the name of "speculative builder" would lose its stigma. Provided always that he builds soundly from good designs, he fills an important and useful place, and is well entitled to the profits that his enterprise secures. There is no reason why a ready-made house should not be as good in itself as one built to suit individual needs and tastes. It will fit the average man as well as a ready-made suit will do when his dimensions are wholly normal. It is unlikely to be so

207.—LEIGH HOUSE: ENTRANCE.



208.—LEIGH HOUSE: PLAN.

interesting, because the architect is not so free to express his own personality, and the character of the future owner, which he would also wish to impress on the building, is an unknown quantity.

There is another general point of interest about these Farnham houses. Mr. Harold Falkner is a Farnham man. It is probable that the majority of country houses throughout England, great and small, that are worthily designed are done by London architects. A century ago there was hardly such a person as the provincial architect. He was conspicuously rare in the eighteenth century, so rare, indeed, that those men who rose out of their country obscurity bore their city's name like a title—Carr of York and Wood of Bath, for example.

209.—GARDEN FRONT OF LEIGH HOUSE.

About 1800 Joseph Gandy, an architect A.R.A., who wrote of the Small Country Houses of his day, pleaded with the nobility and gentry not to let their estate agents design out of their ignorance, but added "it has been frequently remarked that gentlemen residing in the country, who build, have been deterred from applying to professional Designers . . . but this might be better managed by directing the Country Surveyor . . . to convey his plans to a professional Architect, where they would receive that polish which can only be expected from men whose education and practice, as Artists, enable them to distinguish between true and false taste."

In 1805, if we may believe Gandy, London architects were the sole fountains of "polish." That advice sounds odd in 1919. Not only are the

provinces provided with many architects of skill and artistic ability, but, in the larger centres, schools of local design are beginning to take definite shape, as may best be seen at Birmingham. The local architect has the great advantage that he knows the local conditions and the local men. The builders who work for him year in and year out are not frightened by his specifications. They consequently do not include in their tenders sums which are practically insurance premiums against requirements which they may think unreasonable, as sometimes happens when the architect is strange to the district. When all is said, however, it remains that there are few places of the size of Farnham that can claim an architect so abreast of the development of design as Mr. Falkner; nor must it be forgotten that many provincial "architects" have no claim to

210.—GARDEN FRONT OF COSTLEY'S.

the title in so far as we may assume that it should indicate any real education in design.

Costley's and Leigh House are similar in plan and general treatment. The terrace at Costley's is parapeted with an open-work wall built of curved tiles. At the end of it there is a pleasant little gazebo (Figs. 210 and 211) with demure hipped roof and rusticated quoins which accord admirably with the main building. The quoins throughout are of rusticated brick, whereas at Leigh House there are plastered pilasters which seem to cut up the house rather too markedly. They would have been more suitable features in a whitewashed house. The balanced design of both houses would have pleased John Evelyn, the diarist, who was clear that "it is from the asymmetrie of our Buildings, want of decorum and proportion in our Houses, that the irregularity of our humors and affections may be shrewdly

discerned." Decorum is, perhaps, as good a word as any to express the character of the simple Georgian form which Leigh House and Costley's have taken. The mingled red and blue bricks of their walls are pleasantly varied here and there by a few " headers " of yellow stock brick. Symmetrical planning brings with it some small disadvantages.

On the entrance front of Leigh House, for example, both the staircases run across windows, which does not add to the attractiveness of the elevation as seen from the outside, but it has no practical disadvantage, and short curtains would remedy it. Indeed, the house is planned as well as can be with large, airy and well lighted rooms throughout. Mr. Falkner was wise to make his dormer windows big, with the result that the four bedrooms and bath-room on the attic floor at Leigh House are, for all ordinary purposes, as good as those on the first floor, where there are six bedrooms and a bath-room. The front door here is made up of a small old door, which has been framed with a new margin to fill the opening, and does so very attractively. The grille above it is an old fire-screen put to a new use (Fig. 207).

211.—TERRACE AT COSTLEY'S.

The third house, shown in Figs. 212 to 216, differs from the other two in that it was designed for a specific client and for one who laid it down that Mr. Falkner should repeat two features of his earlier home, a drawing-room with a curved bay, and a rather straggling staircase in the hall. The former is an isolated feature which it is difficult to work into a plan without its dominating the whole scheme, but the requirements have been well met by setting back the wall that contains it behind the main part of the south front.

The treatment of the staircase meets the specified condition and it has been made attractive by its balusters. It is, however, an awkward arrangement at the best and so dominates the hall as to destroy any privacy in its use as sitting-room (Fig. 213). Free-standing posts supporting stairs across a hall seem a rather extravagant feature in a house of no great size. They involve a loss of space, which would be saved were the staircase carried up the wall in the usual way.

Save for the doubtful wisdom of reproducing in a new house elements of an older one which lack any marked intrinsic interest, the ground floor plan is well devised (Fig. 216). The entrance is approached by an ample drive, and the

front door duly emphasised by its charming stone framing. This afforded Mr. Falkner pleasant scope for his talent as well in hand work as in design. The capitals, shield and swags he carved himself (Fig. 212), and the ornament in the curved pediment on the south front is also to his credit.

Mr. Falkner's carving was not done because of any idea that it would be better than if carried out by a skilled carver, but for two good reasons. The first was that the narrow limits of cost within which he was working would have allowed only an inferior craftsman. The second is to be sought in Mr. Falkner's belief that excursions into handicraft broaden the outlook of an architect and quicken his sense of the right uses of material.

212.—CARVED BY MR. FALKNER.

213.—STAIRCASE BUILT ACROSS HALL.

Such occasional adventures stimulate a man when next he comes to devise full-size details at his drawing board, and tend to remove the reproach, not always untrue, that buildings owe as much to the craftsman as to the architect.

The entrance door is an old one from France, and the delicacy of its panelling makes an agreeable foil to the robust treatment of the doorhead. Another hint of France is the fleur-de-lys in the shutters that have no very apparent purpose on the sunless northern front. The staircase window to the right seems a little over-emphasised by the pediment

which breaks the line of the eaves, and has rather the air of being squeezed into a space too small for it. Throughout the ground floor the doors of the chief rooms are of Spanish mahogany, simply waxed, and very well they look. The habit of clouding this wood with a purplish stain followed by French polish is so usual that people are apt to forget how attractive is its natural colour. In Germany the practice of having it unstained is more common.

The kitchen and its offices are well planned in relation to each other and the dining-room. One does not quite see how the placing of the kitchen range

214.—ENTRANCE FRONT FROM NORTH-EAST.

facing the window could have been avoided. It is, however, always desirable that an effort be made to bring the light across the cook's left shoulder as she stands at her work. The general effect of the house is excellent and the detail thoughtful and refined.

The stout mouldings in brick on the south front give an air of quiet richness, which is taken up by the moulded cornice at the eaves. Where there are keys to the window lintels, however, resort has been made to a doubtful expedient for adding interest to the work. They are built up of tiles on end arranged in varying patterns, and a note of warning may well be sounded

here about thin tiles employed in place of brick. Minor arches may properly be built in this manner, and the alternation of thin red tile with wide white mortar joint gives a texture and colour which justly explain their popularity. Every element of building, however, carries, or should carry, with it some definite idea which dominates its treatment, and the key-block of an arch suggests solidity in fact, and at least a homogeneous air. To build it, then, of tiles seems to destroy its character.

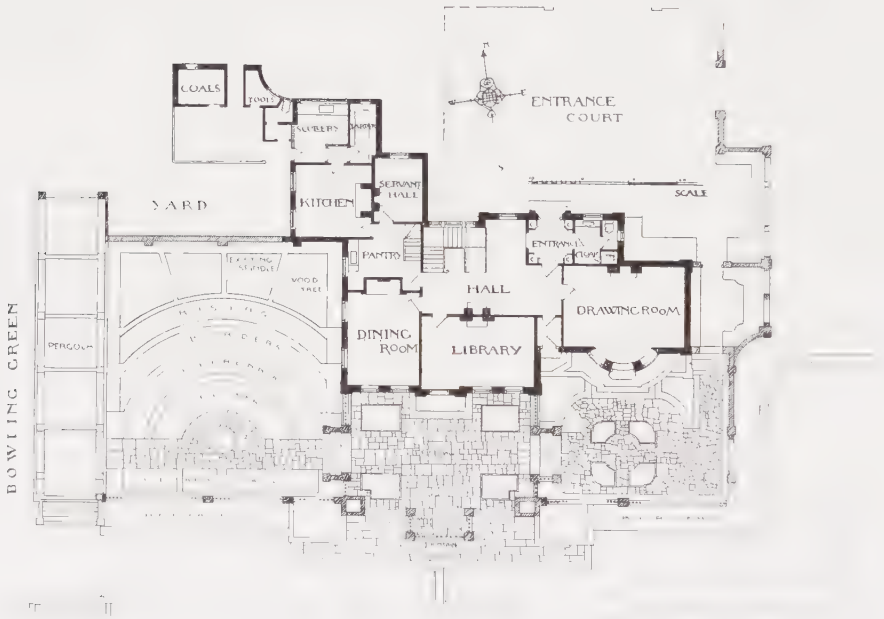
It may be thought a small critical point to make where so much is admirable, and I have seen a thousand places where far less thought has been

215.—GARDEN FRONT FROM NORTH-WEST.

given to tile-building, but warnings against fashions never do harm. Fashions in clothes live for a year, their extravagances run their course and find in time a welcome euthanasia. Fashions in gardening, if they are bad, are not irrevocable. For their remedy a wall can be pulled down here, a terrace changed in level there, while a day of ploughing gives clean tablets for the writing of a new tale of flowers.

With buildings it is different. Fashions in planning make their marks on the bones of a building which nothing but drastic surgery may change. Fashions in the main proportions are in like manner indelible. Tricks of texture may be changed, for plaster will give a wall a new skin. The real

trouble is that fashion in building is the enemy of definite enduring progress. The nineteenth century was a cockpit for contending gospels of design. It is because there are hopes that the twentieth will deny itself the passionate amusement of revivals that this small and, it may be hoped, not ungentle caveat has been entered.



216.—GROUND FLOOR AND GARDEN PLAN.

CHAPTER XXVII.—FAIRSHOT COURT, SANDRIDGE, HERTS.

A House by Mr. Alan Foyds — Good Disposition of Stable Block — Women's Criticism of Architects—Cupboards and Attics.

AT Fairshot Court Mr. Royds has employed the quiet traditions of the early eighteenth century with considerable success. The house is markedly simple, but considerable interest is given by the well designed stone cornice, the pleasant dormers with their little hipped roofs and the substantial and well built chimneys. Nor is the relief of colour lacking. Walls and roof are red, and the jalousies have been painted blue, with good results. The grouping of the stables with reference to the house has been well managed. They are set round a stable-yard on the north-east side (Fig. 219) and separated from the forecourt by a curtain wall. For these subsidiary buildings a less stately treatment has been wisely chosen, and the walls have been covered with white rough-trowelled plaster. The plan of the house is eminently simple. We enter by the north-west and find four living-rooms opening from the hall, which has no pretensions to being a sitting-room. The three chief of them face south-west, and are all pleasant rooms, the drawing-room in particular boasting an attractive old mantelpiece (Fig. 222). The kitchen and other servants' buildings are at the east corner, and the windows of the former have been thoughtfully made to look out on to the stable-yard in order that the privacy of the garden front may be maintained. Upstairs the rooms are well planned and spacious, and, owing to the substantial proportions of the dormer windows, the rooms on the attic floor are particularly good.

217.—ENTRANCE FRONT.

218.—FROM THE EAST.

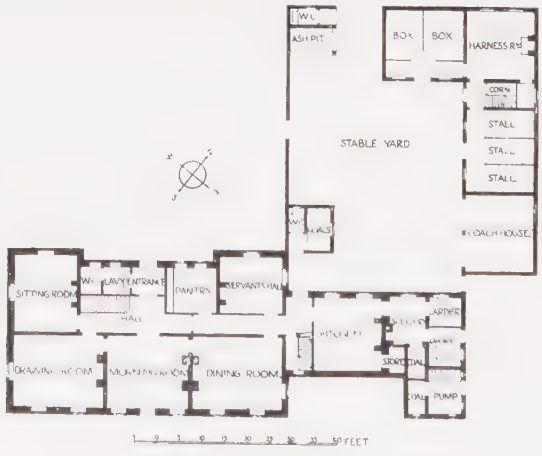
The house was built for the occupation of three ladies. From time to time the complaint is made that architects would design very much more convenient homes if they approached the problem from the woman's point of view. In so far as this implies that they do not consider the practical requirements of a household, it seems a distinct libel, for the details of house-planning were certainly never more closely considered or more admirably contrived than they are to-day. At all events, no railing accusation can be brought against Fairshot Court in this connection. It is sometimes claimed that the question of sunny aspect is not properly considered. Even a casual study of the house-plans which are

219.—FROM THE NORTH: STABLES IN FOREGROUND.

220.—FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.

221.—IN THE DRAWING ROOM.

reproduced in this book will show that the question of sunny rooms is an urgent preoccupation with every architect of skill. Of the living-rooms at Fairshot Court one faces north-east and south-east, one south-east only, one south-east and south-west, and the fourth south-west and north-west. Nothing can be better than this. Another feminine demand is that small rooms should be so arranged that they can be thrown together into one. This, again, is very often done ; but it has its disadvantages. It should not be forgotten, on the other side, that the provision of doors between rooms tends to destroy privacy and to multiply noises. The commonest complaint is that enough cupboard accommodation is rarely provided. This was certainly just twenty years ago, but it is a matter to which great attention is now given. One critic I have in mind wrote that " the architect often aims at what he considers a picturesque roof, involving a lot of expense and work in erection, and resulting in a very serious deterioration of the bedrooms under it." As far as cost goes, the precise opposite represents the facts as they are. Attic bedrooms provided in the roof may well be cheaper per cubic foot than if the walls were carried up in brick or stone so as to avoid sloping ceilings, and the craving for the picturesque, which is too often attributed to the architect, is often based on a regard for his client's pocket. This is certainly the case with Fairshot Court. The roof is an attractive feature, yet the rooms in it are admirable, and the cost of the house per cubic foot was the lower by their being so treated.



222.—GROUND FLOOR PLAN.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—HOVENDEN HOUSE, FLEET, LINCOLNSHIRE.

Lord Sandwich on the Choice of Sites — Mr. J. E. Dixon-Spain's Planning of Aspects—A Good Kitchen Dresser—John D. Sedding on Architecture and the Sister Arts.

LINCOLNSHIRE can claim little by way of definite building tradition. Mr. J. E. Dixon-Spain was wise, therefore, to rely upon a type of design which is of a universal rather than a local sort. Nor can it be said that the site of Hovenden House has any especial character which gave suggestion or help to the architect in the development of his design. All that can be said of it is that it is typical of the Lincolnshire fen country, and that its very flatness helps the house to broad views in all directions, and, best of all, to the wide waters of the Wash. Such a situation, open as it is, demanded a house that offers a large solidity to every wind that blows. It is one of the merits of Hovenden House that its exterior, of ripe red brickwork, with a porch of beautiful brown stone shot with blue, suggests the air of comfort which we find within. It would have gained in simplicity if the two-storey bays on the south-east front had been omitted, but at a loss to the amenities of the billiard and drawing rooms and of the two chief bedrooms.

223.—PART OF NORTH-EAST FRONT.

Domestic architecture is essentially an affair of compromises, whether it be in the choice of a site, the plan of the house, its external design, or the materials of which it is built. It is for this reason that the critic must walk warily and cannot, moreover, do justice to any building without a first-hand knowledge of all the factors which influenced its making. The first scrap of architectural criticism which we find in that excellent storehouse, the Diary of Samuel Pepys, bears on this point. He and his patron, Sir Edward Montagu (afterwards Lord Sandwich), were ashore at Dover in 1660 on the business of Charles II's Restoration. "Among other things, my Lord showed me a house that cost a

224.—GARDEN FRONT FROM THE SOUTH.

225.—THE ENTRANCE FRONT.

great deal of money and is built in so barren and inconvenient a place that my Lord calls it the fool's house." This sounds very drastic, but it may have been a grave injustice to the builder. He may even have been a man, born out of due time, with a taste for a fine sea view. In those days folk had a horror of an exposed situation. They would often build in a confined valley, which we should think airless and unsuitable, rather than risk being blown upon by the south wind, which they regarded as positively pestilential. To-day a man who lays out his house with a disregard of south aspects is thought something of a crank. Some of the mutilation of old houses has resulted from the attempt of later

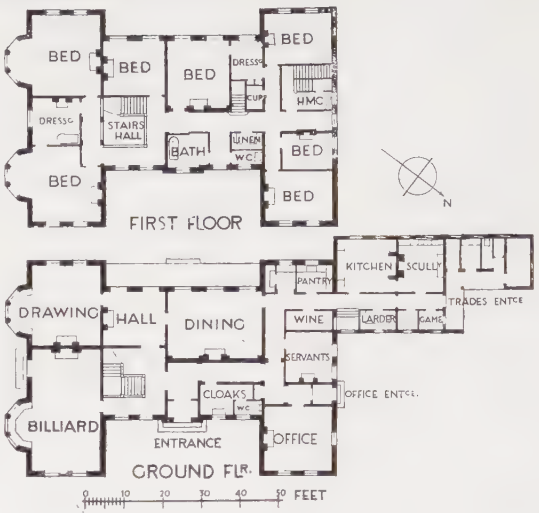
227.—A FIREPLACE.

226.—FIRST FLOOR CORRIDOR.

generations to correct the mistakes of the old builders in this respect.

In its placing on the site Hovenden House follows approved rules. The entrance front faces north-east, and the chief reception and bed rooms have south-east and south-west aspects. There is little doubt that this is better than having the main axis of the building due north and south. The kitchen is hardly so well managed, as it is lighted only from the south-west, which makes it rather hot. It is difficult to see how this could have been avoided, however, and the two larders are rightly placed facing north-east. The staircase is well set so that two of the upstairs corridors, which have plaster vaulting, serve as galleries to it (Fig. 226). A good feature of the house is the generous lighting of the attic floor

by big dormer windows, which thus enable effective use to be made of the roof space. The plan of this floor (not reproduced) includes not only a servants' wing with three bedrooms and a bath-room cut off by a swing door, but three children's bedrooms with a well lighted corridor five feet wide, which is useful as a play-space in bad weather. Attention may be drawn to Fig. 229, which shows a good kitchen dresser with flanking cupboards, and to Fig. 227, with its pleasantly designed fireplace. In one or two unexpected corners little plaster reliefs are to be found, such as a "St. George and Dragon." This seems about as far as sculpture can come to the aid of the architect within the small country house of modest dimensions, save in the modelling of plaster ceilings and in the carving of a newel-post here or a capital there. Architecture can be wholly independent of the sister arts, and, indeed, fails when she becomes subservient to them. John D. Sedding was right in pointing out the architectural poverty of buildings such as the Sistine Chapel and St. Maria degli Angeli at Lugano, which were designed round painting and sculpture. He put the case well when he said, "The architect can frame a structure which shall be full of intellect and evocative power without the aid of sculptor or painter." That is not a plea for neglecting the aid of the sister arts when they can rightly be employed to enrich a building, but it is helpful in emphasising the fact that applied decorations are a luxury and not a necessity in architectural design.



228.—GROUND AND FIRST FLOOR PLANS.

229.—THE KITCHEN DRESSER.

CHAPTER XXIX.—LAMARSH RECTORY, ESSEX.

Mr. Huddart's Careful Study of Parsonage Needs—Special Planning—Kitchen Aspects—Queen Anne's Bounty Rules—Good Brick-laying.

LAMARSH RECTORY stands in a tiny scattered village near Bures, and close to the borderland that separates Essex from Suffolk. It is in a country which knows little of mason-craft. Practically every house and cottage is of brick, and some of them are covered with the coating of tooled plaster which reaches its highest expression further east, about Saffron Walden and Newport. The planning of the house is worth considering as Mr. Huddart has given good expression to the needs of a country parson. In a scattered parish such as Lamarsh coach-house and stable are almost essential features of a rectory, and they have been made to group satisfactorily with the house itself (Fig. 231). The latter is approached by a drive from the main road which brings us to the entrance forecourt, and on the west side is a screened wall with gates leading to the stable-yard. We enter under a simple doorhood into a small vestibule. To reach the study we turn to the left, and it will be noted that this disposition enables visiting parishioners to be ushered into the Rector's private room without crossing the family part of the house. The staircase has been built between two walls, and takes up the minimum of space. The site slopes up westwards, and some ingenuity

230.—ENTRANCE FRONT.

was necessary in the arrangement of the levels to prevent the excessive digging and banking which would have been required in order to keep the whole of the ground floor on the same level. There are, therefore, two steps up from the entrance lobby to the kitchen passage. This arrangement would have been inconvenient for service, because maids with trays are very apt to slip over stairs, but for the provision of a serving-hatch between the kitchen passage and the dining-room. A word may be said as to the aspect of the kitchen. In the ordinary way, windows to the south and west are undesirable ; but in this case the ordinary criticism loses its sting, because the hill on the west side prevents the intrusion of the almost horizontal rays of the westering sun, and the south rays, being more vertical, do not trouble the cook as she stands by the kitchen range. The store and larder are well placed, facing north.

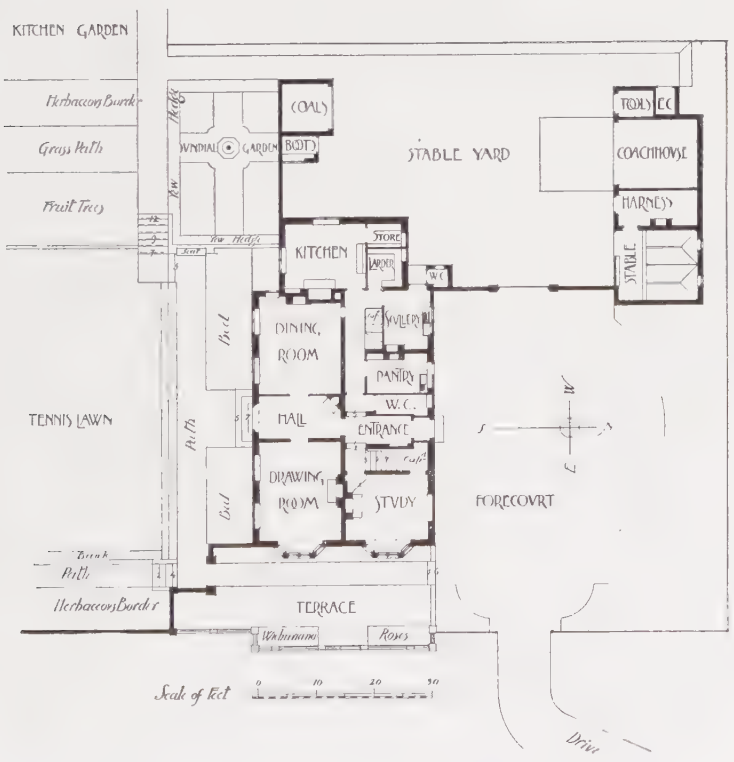
In general, it will be observed that the kitchen and its offices are compactly arranged and somewhat small. The latter quality, however, can hardly be considered a defect in a parsonage house which has to be managed with a small staff of servants, and large ideas in kitchen-planning mean a larger area to be kept clean. Attention has also been given to cutting off the yard which serves the kitchen and the stable both from the forecourt and from the garden on the south. The drawing-room, hall and dining-room form one suite facing due south, and very pleasant rooms they are, looking out on a tennis lawn and, south-westwards, over a field waving with oats the summer I was there.

The treatment of the whole of the south front as a connected suite has its obvious advantages in a rector's home, where social functions involving a number

231.—FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.

of guests must be held from time to time. Sometimes it is a good thing for the doors between such apartments to be wide and folding; but Mr. Huddart elected to use ordinary single doors in this case, and no doubt wisely, because wider openings make difficulties in the placing of furniture. The ideal

232.—FROM THE NORTH-WEST.



233.—GROUND FLOOR PLAN.

arrangement undoubtedly is to have a pair of folding doors sliding in the thickness of the wall, but the fittings are rather costly.

Lamarsh Rectory was built under the controlling authority of the Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty. They have rules to ensure that parsonages shall be solidly and simply built, to stand the onslaught of time and wind and weather, and to need the minimum of repair. All this is very reasonable, but necessarily militates against very inexpensive building, unless, by way of set-off, the architect can contrive economies in planning. That this has been done at Lamarsh is obvious when the cost is set out. The house alone was completed for fourteen

234.—EAST FRONT.

235.—GARDEN FRONT.

hundred pounds, which translates into a cubic foot price of sevenpence. The house, with its stables and out-buildings, represented a final total of seventeen hundred and fifty pounds, and worked out at sixpence-halfpenny a cubic foot. To bring these figures to present-day levels it would be necessary to add at least a hundred per cent. But whether considered in terms of pre-war or present prices, the relative cost appears the more creditable when it is added that the cartage of materials from Bures Station meant a heavy item. On the east front the architect has allowed himself a little latitude by providing moulded brick jambs and mullions for the windows. The sloping site meant considerable excavation, and the roof timbers are, by the direction of Queen Anne's Bounty, a good deal heavier than is usual in an ordinary house. Against these hampering conditions there is only to be set the compactness of the planning, the low cost of labour in East Anglia about ten years ago, and the exclusion of ornamental features.

When we come to consider the general architectural treatment, it is apparent that Mr. Huddart has come under the influence of Sir Edwin Lutyens, and this is

natural enough, for he worked in the latter's office for some time. That is not to say that the Rectory is an imitative work, but there are features about it which indicate that Mr. Huddart has not been insensitive to his early training. The walls are of a very interesting red brick, and their satisfactory colouring is the more noteworthy seeing that the local ideas with regard to the choice and laying of bricks leave a good deal to be desired. The prevailing method is to sort all the bricks into their different shades, and to build each stretch of wall with bricks of the same shade. This gives a dead level of uninteresting surface which yields nothing to the play of light and shade. The difficulty was overcome by obtaining from different yards bricks of four several shades, and insisting on their being mixed indiscriminately and laid as they came to the men's hands. It is not surprising that the builder was distressed at what he regarded as a lamentable misuse of good material. Probably by now, however, when he sees the attractive texture and changing tone of the wall surfaces, with their consequent appearance of vitality, he is convinced that his methods, beloved as they were during the nineteenth century, are best consigned to forgetfulness in favour of practice based on the traditions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

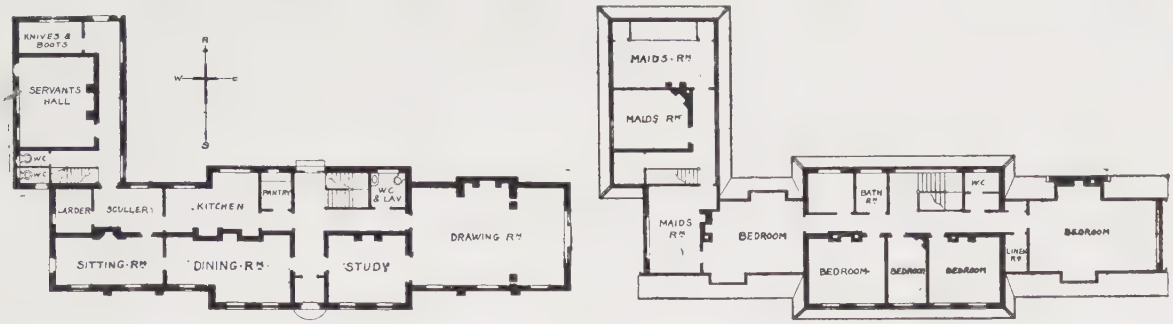
236.—STAIRS AND LANDING.

CHAPTER XXX.—YOCKLEY HOUSE, CAMBERLEY, SURREY.

Designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield, R.A., for the late Charles Furse—Concerning Mansard Roofs—Arched Elms and Swaying Poplars—Sir Reginald's Service to the Art of the Formal Garden—A Quotation from Sir William Temple—R.L.S. on Restraint.

YOCKLEY HOUSE is of an unusual and interesting type—long and low, with its walls running no higher than the first-floor level, and with a Mansard roof on the middle block. This roof came originally from across the Channel, and gets its name from one of the many French architects who bore the name of Mansart. Its efficiency, however, is so obvious that it commended itself to the builders of weather-boarded cottages in Kent and tiled barns elsewhere during the eighteenth century. With the Mansard the sharper slope of the lower part gives far more headroom on the upper floor, and its failure to become more generally acclimatised in this country is a good example of our stubborn persistence in traditional ways. The word "mansarde" is sometimes given in France to the large dormer window which the form of the roof makes seemly, but in England the meaning has become transferred from the window to the roof itself. Its true principle as discovered by Mansart consisted in bringing its five points (in section), the base of the roof, the ridge and the intermediate breaks

237.—GARDEN FRONT FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.



238.—PLANS.

239.—THE SOUTH SIDE.

on the line of a catenary curve. A correctly designed Mansard roof stands without collar or vertical strut. Some folks who use these roofs forget this, or never knew it, and their structural significance is thus apt to be lost. Unless, then, it is in such competent hands as Sir Reginald Blomfield's, the Mansard is, for country houses, a roof best ignored, as less clearly in

the line of English traditions. At Yockley he has treated it in two ways. On the entrance front the lower part of the roof has been carried back at a flattish slope to a curb, from which rises straight a long range of dormers separated by vertical slate-hanging. On the garden front the five chief dormers are distinct, and are finished with pediments alternately straight-sided and curved. The house is not large, but the careful proportion and symmetry of the scheme give rightness of scale and an air of dignity. Since its first building the house has undergone a marked change. Devised as a home for that brilliant painter the late Charles Furse, his unhappy and premature death threw the big studio at the east end into disuse. It originally occupied the full height of the house, but has since been divided into two storeys to provide a drawing-room below and more bedroom accommodation above. At the same time a wing was added at the west end, with the idea that at some future date its fellow would be built at the east to restore to the entrance front the symmetry it then lost. Indoors, the prevailing impression is of lightness and spaciousness. The general treatment of walls, doors and the like is entirely simple, save for a touch of richness given by some carved woodwork collected in France.

240.—THE VERANDAH.

As is natural where the architect is the author of "The Formal Garden in England," much thought has been devoted to the setting of Yockley House, with very delightful results. Mr. Furse was not less an enthusiast for ordered design than Sir Reginald himself, and his knowledge and love of old French gardens helped him to develop the surroundings of a building, itself conceived somewhat in a French spirit, on lines wholly sympathetic. The garden does

not cover a large area, but the skilful way in which it has been set out gives a sense of expansiveness. A long walk of arched elms provides a green retreat for sunny days, and an accompanying picture shows the delightful dignity of the avenue of poplars, slender though they were when photographed after no more than ten years' growth. This massing of various types of growth into one place—elms into an arched walk and poplars into a long avenue—is of the essence of successful garden design, for the interest of each is concentrated. Thus is attained a unity of composition in every part that gives a largeness to the whole.

Very apt is the placing at the end of the poplar avenue on a tall pedestal of the

241.—THE FORECOURT.

242.—FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.

bust of young Augustus, with the flavour of classical grace that it brings. The right use of sculpture in the garden is difficult enough ; it is rare that it looks reasonable, but its absence from this grassed walk, with its gentle swaying sentinels, would be a definite loss. It is in a garden like this that the services of Sir Reginald, in pressing the claims of the formal garden with pen and by example, become sensitively apparent. It is not much less than thirty years ago that his book (already referred to) appeared, and since then its influence has extended so widely that the idea of the formal garden no longer needs defence. The battle has been won. Others before him had thrown ridicule on the fantastic theories of the gardeners who claimed a sham Nature as their guide and inspiration. It was left to him to support the case for the older gardening with an array of historic instance and practical advice which brought things down from the level of windy controversy into the garden of plain possibility and fact. When all is said of gardens, we can get no better statement of the main principles which should govern the design than was given by Sir William Temple in "The Gardens of Epicurus": "In every garden four things are necessary to be provided for, flowers, fruit, shade and water, and whoever lays out a garden without all these, must not pretend it in any perfection ; it ought to lie to the best parts of the house, or to those of the master's commonest use, so as to be but like one of the rooms, out of which you step into another." At Yockley the four things are easily found, and that the water is pleasantly provided in a hedge-encircled pool Fig. 239 adequately testifies.

243.—THE POPLAR AVENUE IN 1911.

When the house is seen across it, the middle block in red brick, the wings in cream-coloured rough-cast and the roof in cool grey slates, its chief quality appears as a scholarly restraint. It may be that, to the general public, work of this kind looks unduly academic, but, to the architect with enough eye for proportion to do it, the advice of Robert Louis Stevenson (though given in respect of literature) remains forceful and true: "In a style which aims more and more successfully at the academic, one purple word is already much; three—a whole phrase—is inadmissible. Wed yourself to a clean austerity; that is your force. Wear a linen ephod, splendidly candid. Arrange its folds, but do not fasten it with any brooch."

Architecture has as well its purple words and brooches, to be used and worn with strict economy. But just as the subject of a writer sometimes forces him, so emphasis must sometimes fall on outstanding features of a building, and then, to use another phrase of Robert Louis Stevenson, the architect should "be ready with a twinkle of your pleasantry." In the main, however, as he says elsewhere, "There is but one art—to omit! O if I knew how to omit I would ask no other knowledge."

244.—THE STAIRCASE.

245.—THE ENTRANCE FRONT.

CHAPTER XXXI.—HILLTOP, SUNNINGDALE.

The Reasonable Claim of Tradition—To Control Form but not Planning—Mr. A. E. Richardson's Understanding of the Georgian Atmosphere—A Flavour of "Colonial" in the Design.

TRADITION lays the weight of a dead hand on architecture if it be not interpreted in the light of modern needs. A well known architect is reported to have asked why he should spoil his design of a house merely to ensure that the kitchen quarters should be planned in accordance with the latest fad. "Twenty years hence," he said, "there will be a new set of ideas and the arrangement thought so perfect to-day will be hopelessly old-fashioned. Whatever I do now the planning will be remodelled then; so I will at least give him a house that shall be pleasant to look upon." That was an evasion of the problem that the wise client demands shall be solved by the wise architect.

246.—FROM THE ROAD.

247.—ENTRANCE FRONT FROM THE EAST.

248. GARDEN FRONT.

General Sir Bruce Hamilton found an adequate solution in the house he built at Sunningdale to the designs of Mr. A. E. Richardson (of Messrs. Richardson and Gill). The planning is compact and ingenious, and yields spacious reception rooms and a large number of bedrooms for the size of the house. In addition to those shown in the plans (Fig. 250), there are four good attic rooms in the main block. Note may be made of the skilful placing of the secondary stair in the wing. The aim to combine comfort and practicable working with architectural success has

249.—THE ENTRANCE.

250.—PLANS.

been achieved. The house was finished in 1914, and its massive chimneys, steep pitched roof, restful sashing and finely modelled porch are elements which, in conjunction with its careful planning, proclaim it an authentic expression of our Georgian day. Moreover, its precision and dignity make it fitly expressive of the distinguished soldier for whom it was built. Seen from a distance, the grouping silhouettes somewhat sternly against the skyline, but on nearer approach a more pictorial effect develops a *mise en scène* in which the entrance gates, gambrel roofed garage and outbuildings asymmetrically foil the refined proportions of

the house. The plan is so contrived that a southern wing may some day be added to balance the northern projection, but meanwhile the latter is so carefully subordinated to the main block that there is no sense of balance lacking.

The character with which Mr. Richardson has invested his building is based on a tradition too little followed. Hilltop is in the direct line from those gravely designed houses of the mid-eighteenth century for which Isaac Ware and Sir Robert Taylor set the fashion for a host of unknown builders. The small towns of the Home Counties are enriched with scores of charming inventions in this sober yet generous manner. This sound tradition has been interpreted with a scholarship and artistry that give significance to what may develop into the merely dull with less skilful handling; for the homely note of the elevations needs to be enlivened by great certainty of touch and refinement of detail both within and without, and, if they fail, flavour is lacking. It is also evident that the designer is familiar with the Colonial tradition at its best, as it is seen in the country houses near Philadelphia and on the banks of the James River. His treatment of the entrance gates recalls those examples of treillage associated with the time when America was bound to England by uneasy legal ties instead of, as now, by the bond of a common defence of human liberties.

251.—HALL AND STAIRS.

Hilltop might well have taken the Stevensonian name of "The Pavilion on the Links" had not its position on the highest ground at Sunningdale predetermined the title it now bears. The site was chosen for the delightful views it yields in all directions, for its nearness to the village and the famous golf course. The miniature estate is breezy and open; no massive walls hide from the public gaze either garden or house, and the latter stands athwart the links in full enjoyment of its rights. It seems, as all good houses should, to stand there because it must.

Hilltop, indeed, is an admirable piece of modern work, because comfort and homeliness have been given a scholarly expression and every feature of the house reveals that understanding of home life which is innate in the English-speaking peoples. It is the result of planning for modern needs and not historically, but letting tradition control the design in atmosphere, form and colour. It is made the more possible when client and architect, as in this case, were in a pleasant partnership to win the desired result.

252.—IN THE DRAWING-ROOM.

CHAPTER XXXII.—RIDGELAND HOUSE, FINCHAMPSTEAD.

Mr. Clough Williams-Ellis also adopts "Colonial" Motif—A Lofty Entrance Hall—Interlocking Serving-hatch—Concerning Gas Fittings.

RIDGELAND HOUSE stands high up on Finchampstead Ridge, where from this southern rampart of the Berkshire Hills Hampshire is overlooked as far as Basingstoke. When the Bearwood Estate was broken up a few years since the National Trust secured some twenty acres of the wild and wooded upland that lies midway between Wellington College and Kingsley's Eversley, just south of the old Roman road, as a place of natural beauty to be preserved for the nation for ever. In a little spinney of oak and fir and silver birch adjoining this lovely common Ridgeland was built in 1914. The war found it just completed, though only partly decorated. It was early offered and accepted as a convalescent military hospital, so that this deficiency made it the more readily adaptable to its new and unforeseen function as a sanatorium of twenty beds, in which honourable role its little colonnades and terraces, its bracing air and lovely prospects helped in the work of healing.

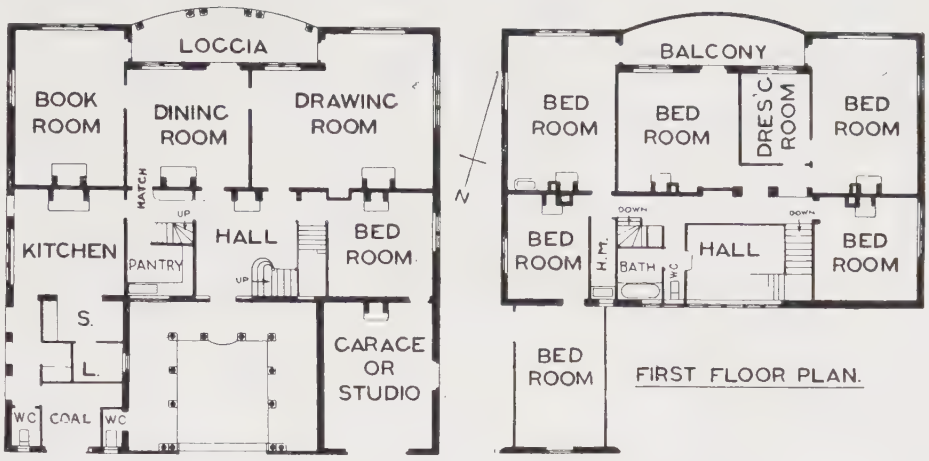
The house is a simple "H" in plan, the shallow recess to the south being filled by a bowed and pillared porch that lies in the eye of the sun and overlooks the leafy valley of the Blackwater towards Bramshill, Strathfieldsaye and Silchester.

253.—ENTRANCE COURT FROM FRONT DOOR

254.—GARDEN FRONT FROM SOUTH-WEST.

255.—ENTRANCE FRONT.

All the principal rooms have windows towards this view and the sun, large wide-opening windows set low above deep window-seats that stand out into the rooms on slender spindle-legs. These seats likewise serve the useful purpose of



256.—GROUND AND FIRST FLOOR PLANS.

257.—THE STAIRCASE.

concealing squat ventilating radiators below. The little colonnaded entrance court has an amusing "Colonial" flavour, and, indeed, the whole house savours pleasantly of eighteenth century Virginia. The contriving of a quite spacious and lofty entrance hall in a place of such small pretensions as Ridgeland is a somewhat bold experiment, but it at once gives the visitor a sense of the airy roominess that characterises the whole house. Several pleasant features contribute to the success of this little hall, the many archways—there are six on the gallery alone—the long range of clerestory windows above the roof of the colonnade, the floor of old black and white stone (salved from a house-breaker's yard); the hint of richness in the dark oak stair-rails and newel-urns, the bold proportions of the fireplace—grey terra-cotta of a pleasant stone-like

texture. This fireplace, with the chimney caps and several other details, was made to the architect's designs by the Potters' Art Guild at neighbouring Compton under the directing eye of Mrs. G. F. Watts. In all the chief rooms the mantelpieces make a distinct and successful bid for our attention. That in the drawing-room is an engaging conceit in the manner of the classicist of 1800. Gilded pilasters reeded on the surface reach from the floor to the ceiling cornice, and some gilded tracery of a Gothic tendency marks a reversion to days when designers were not ashamed to mix their motifs.

258.—THE ENTRANCE HALL.

Between the service passage and the dining-room is placed an interlocking hatch of the architect's own devising, whereby the passage of sound and smell is effectually prevented. It is a very simple contrivance of weighted levers so arranged that when the flap on one side is opened that on the other is automatically locked, and *vice versa*. This removes the usual objections to an otherwise valuable device.

It is not until the visitor comes upon the gas-stove flanking the range in the pleasant and airy kitchen that he realises that the tour had been made of a house entirely lit by gas. It is sometimes thought that there is something essentially vile in gas as a means of lighting, but it is rather the extreme vileness in the design, finish and placing of many gas fittings that have brought it into a disrepute wholly undeserved. By the use of well designed, well placed floor standards and glazed wall-boxes of painted wood, Mr. Williams-Ellis contrived to make the gas lighting as inoffensive and as well diffused as electricity.

The ground-floor bedroom was planned with an eye to invalid visitors, though in a "family house" it would no doubt be commissioned as a schoolroom. The present garage, with direct access from the latter, would make an ideal playroom,

but it was primarily designed for convenient conversion into a studio on the eventual building of a contemplated stable block. The same elasticity is maintained elsewhere. The generous roof space is adaptable for conversion into four roomy attics at any time; access has been provided for, and the timbering so calculated as amply to carry such extra loads as this change would involve.

The addition of a projected servants' hall hopefully awaits the happier building conditions of the uncertain future. In the face of present prices it is of almost melancholy interest to turn over the building accounts of Ridgeland; but it is fair to add that unusually good value was obtained for the money spent, even in those far-away days of cheap building. For only the simplest and most accessible materials went to the making of this dignified little place—stock bricks, pantiles and deal—while the broad simplicity of the plan and its compact "workability" give the house a special interest to those who are faced with the limitations and problems of post-war building.

259.—LOGGIA AND BALCONY.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—RIDGEHANGER, EALING.

Architectural Education and the Housing of the Future—Mr. Robert Atkinson on the Logic of Architecture—Concerning Big Halls and Staircases—A Phrase of Emerson on "Happy Hits"—Corrected by another from Sir Reginald Blomfield.

ON Mr. Robert Atkinson as Headmaster of the Architectural Association's School of Architecture there rests a heavy responsibility, because it is to the skill with which the rising generation of architects is taught that we must look for the re-establishment of a sound English tradition. For about four years the A. A. School was almost without students, but now that the young warriors have laid down their arms and have returned to compass and T-square, a big task lies before them. During the next twenty years millions of people will have to be re-housed in a fashion that will be consonant with the sacrifices they have made in a great cause. No longer will England tolerate to hear of a family living in one room or two. Here is a task worthy of all the skill and effort that architects can bring to it, a problem not to be solved by reciting pretty phrases about art, but by hard thinking and a logical grasp of the difficulties. As Mr. Atkinson said in a lecture on the "Logic of Architecture," logic is simply the use of common-sense and the direct application of reasoning to the main points of a problem in the order of their importance. If he is to understand the forces which produce results, the student of architecture must be a student of life also. Next to life, materials

260.—ENTRANCE FRONT.

261.—GARDEN DOOR.

262.—ENTRANCE DOOR.

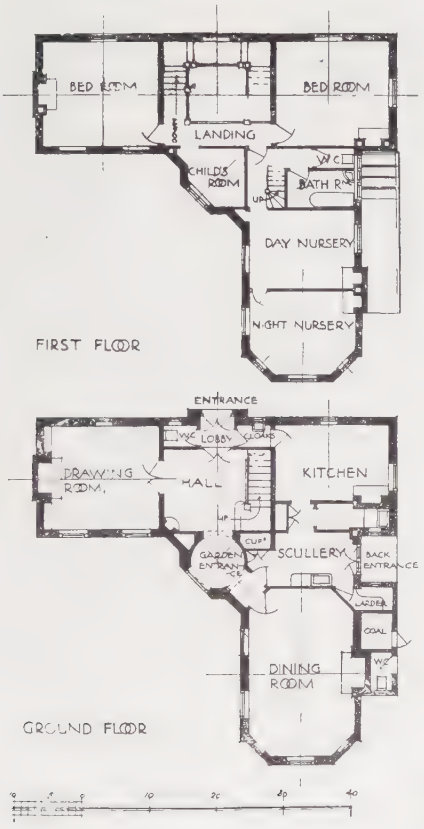
influence architecture most, and the progress of evolution in materials, if not in life, has accelerated at an alarming rate—so rapidly that traditions of design and of expression have tended to be left behind.

The war has so revolutionised the basis of the building industry by creating shortages in certain materials which it will take years to overtake, that the technique of housing will need to be reconsidered *de novo*. It is to be hoped that the re-shaping of the design of small dwellings will be done in that logical spirit for which Mr. Atkinson pleads, but with due regard to those conditions

263.—THE GARDEN FRONT.

of design, labour and method which cannot be ignored without æsthetic disaster. When we turn to the accompanying illustrations we see that Mr. Atkinson is, in some respects, as good as his word, for Ridgehanger shows an interesting solution of the problem of setting an attractive house on a rather narrow suburban site. By planning the house L-fashion not only has an interesting disposition of the rooms been secured, but also a sheltered terrace on the garden front (Fig. 263). Among Mr. Atkinson's lecture aphorisms is this: "Logic is the blending of knowledge of the history of architecture, of knowledge of historical ornament and of draughtsmanship with the requirements of the building, *the needs of the*

people who will inhabit it." . . . In the case of Ridgehanger, one of the needs of Mr. Atkinson's client was that sense of spaciousness which is given by an ample hall and staircase. Ordinarily the devotion of so much cubic space to a feature of this sort is regarded as an extravagance, but there is nothing more logical in an architect than to give his client what he wants, and, as in this case, with such charming effect. It may be assumed that it was also "by request" that there is no pantry, that the normal way from kitchen to front door



264.—PLANS.

265.—HALL AND STAIRS.

is through the cloakroom; and that the downstairs sanitary arrangements are oddly placed.

In general treatment Mr. Atkinson has followed those sane and essentially humane traditions which we owe to the eighteenth century. The harmony of tone in the varied colours of the brickwork and the pantiled roof combined with the skilfully contrived symmetries of the fronts and the delicate detail of doors (Figs. 261 and 262) and windows make up a good effect. Ridgehanger has captured the spirit of Georgian design, which seems in the old houses to have come about naturally and without any effort, but it is certainly

unsafe to accept that impression as a record of the facts in modern work, and it is very doubtful if it is true of the buildings of our forefathers. In this connection one cannot agree with Emerson, whose pronouncements on matters æsthetic must always be approached with some suspicion. "Our arts," he says, "are happy hits. We are like the musician on the lake, whose melody is sweeter than he knows." This would serve well as a polite apologia for the effect of accidental charm which can bear no close examination, but is misleading nonsense when considered. Whatever may be the merits of impressionism in painting, upon which I am happily not required to express an opinion, it is a snare in architecture and in the daughter art of garden design. The truth is to be sought rather in the cogent phrases of Sir Reginald Blomfield, who has said: "There is no such thing as impressionism in architecture. Our art does not allow us to leave our conception sketched out in masonry or brickwork. The idea must be thought out to the uttermost. The incomplete phrase, in our case, is no phrase at all, and, as far as it goes, our expression must be at least equal to our thought."

266.—IN THE DINING-ROOM.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—THORNFIELD, HAMPSTEAD.

The Outcome of a "Country Life" Competition—Mr. Cyril Farey's little Italianate Villa—A well managed Garden Plan—Black Pantiles—An Aphorism from Percier.

IT was in 1912 that COUNTRY LIFE began its policy of stimulating interest in various architectural problems by instituting competitions for designs of typical buildings. The first to be arranged was for a week-end cottage, and the competing architects were not asked to design in the air. The plan of an interesting site was set and the accommodation required by its owner carefully described.

I can answer for the care, because the site was my own. The first prize was won by Mr. C. F. W. Dening and the second by Mr. Cyril Farey. Mr. Dening's design, somewhat amplified (for what intending builder is content with his first modest ideas?), was on the point of being carried out, when war came and

267.—FROM THE ROAD.

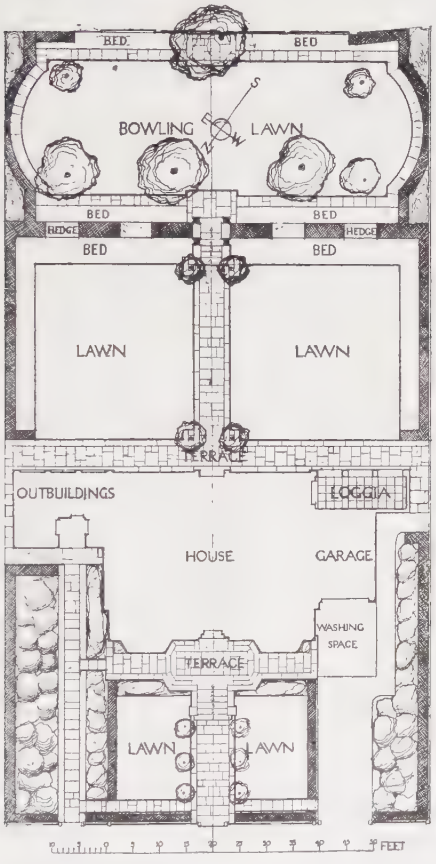
blew the whole project to the winds, and the site has since been devoted to the more urgent needs of food production. Fate has been kinder to Mr. Cyril Farey's design. His client was quicker in getting to work, and Thornfield, built on the fringe of the Hampstead Garden Suburb, is the result.

Naturally enough, some modification in the scheme was inevitable. The site chosen was smaller, the disposition of the rooms has been varied somewhat and their size increased, but the general conception of a small Italianate villa and the proportions and character of the design remain almost unchanged. This is especially true of the garden front, which shows so attractively through a garden

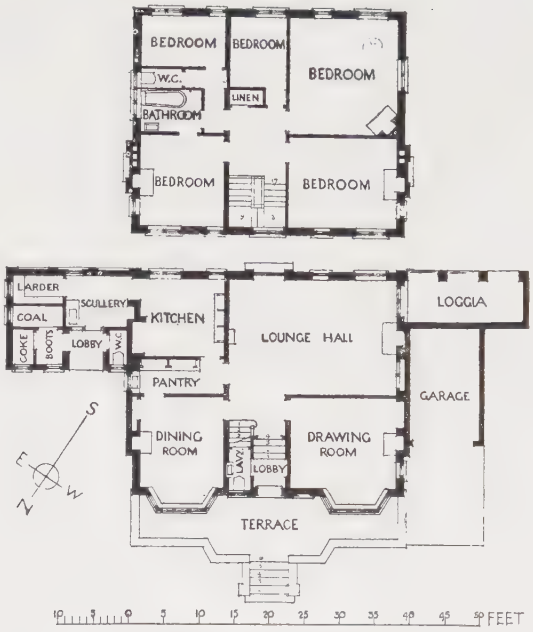
268.—GARDEN FRONT.

opening in Fig. 268. Built of a reddish purple brick, its broad overhanging roof covered with black pantiles, Thornfield is a house with a distinct personality, symmetrical and grave, but welcoming. The garden plan (Fig. 269) shows how cleverly Mr. Farey has made use of the limited space available by breaking it up into dignified little compartments rightly balanced. The little loggia at the south-west corner of the garden front (Fig. 273) lends an especial distinction to the elevation and much added comfort to the house. It is, in effect, an open-air annexe to the hall living-room, with which it communicates (Fig. 272).

Perhaps the chief departure from the idea submitted to the competitors is in the rich and scholarly treatment of the interiors. For an inexpensive week-end cottage one asks no more than stained woodwork and white-washed walls. In a suburban house



369.—GARDEN PLAN.



270.—HOUSE PLANS.

271.—THE ENTRANCE.

it is reasonable to emphasise the urban note, to make the rooms, in fact, of an urbane and kindly aspect.

This has been done at Thornfield. The hall is pleasantly treated with white painted panelling, and the dining-room more ambitiously still with ceiling

272.—FROM HALL TO LOGGIA.

273.—LOGGIA AT SOUTH-WEST CORNER.

as well as walls panelled (Fig. 274). Add to these architectural finishings the graceful and well chosen old furniture that the pictures reveal, and the effect is as attractive as any house of the size can show. Even for a little place like this, perhaps especially, Percier's aphorism holds good: "To be rich without profusion, simple without barrenness is the great aim of an architect."

274.—DINING-ROOM.

CHAPTER XXXV.—THE NEW HOUSE AT NORTHLANDS, EGHAM.

A Return to Century-old Traditions—Mr. Goodhart-Rendel's Obeisance to Sir John Soane—A Note on Pergolas—Upper Loggia and Sun parlour—Style and Styles.

THE New House at Northlands is symptomatic of the fresh thought which is being brought to bear on the problems of domestic design. Mr. Goodhart-Rendel is one of the younger architects who betray considerable affection for the conventions which took charge of architecture about a hundred years ago. His classical detail at this house, when he uses it, is in the rather thin, yet very English manner which we associate with Sir John Soane, seen very well in some fireplaces, etc., at the Soane Museum in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Nor is he afraid to employ the conventional Gothic detail which was popular at the same period—witness the cornice in the drawing-room (Fig. 281). The wiry classical detail is seen on the entrance front (Fig. 278), but when we go round to the garden front the pantiled roof suggests meditations on the art of Sir Charles Barry, and the double arch of the lower loggia is for all the world like part of a garden house by Mr. Peto (Fig. 275). The little roof lights of the upper loggia wink their six demure eyes and make an amusing feature on a front which, for all its variety, hangs together very pleasantly.

275.—LOOKING OUT FROM LOWER LOGGIA.

276.—THE SOUTH FRONT.

277.—GARDEN FRONT FROM END OF PERGOLA.

278.—ENTRANCE FRONT FROM NORTH-EAST.

I am a little doubtful about the pergola (Fig. 277). The Italianate air of the garden front seemed to demand something rather more like the pergola as the country of its birth knows it; it starts bravely from the house as though it were going somewhere, but it reaches no destination save the four brick steps which lead to nowhere in particular. A pergola is an open-air corridor so constructed that it may give incidentally a pretty hospitality to climbing things, and shade to the stroller in gardens. It may be pedantic to cling to the idea that a corridor should lead somewhere, but if it need not, brick piers seem a needlessly stout framework as a scaffold for Dorothy Perkins. I could wish Mr. Goodhart-Rendel had been logical to the extent of putting a pavilion at the end of the walk, for no one is more amusing in the sphere where architectural humour is justified—in garden buildings.

279.—THE UPPER LOGGIA.

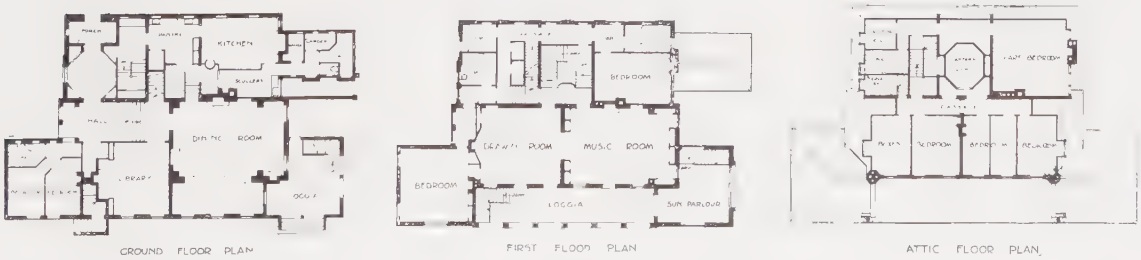
The house is planned well and spaciously (Fig. 282). The upper loggia (Fig. 279) occupies most of the garden front on the first floor and shelters the drawing-room and music room from direct sun, but does not (owing to the six eyebrow windows) rob them of good light. This feature and its neighbour room, the sun-parlour with a stair down to the ground floor loggia, give as complete an equipment for open-air living as could well be devised. The house is large enough to have made it reasonable to give a certain dignity to the staircase, but Mr. Goodhart-Rendel would have none of the solid balustrading which is so widely popular. He was content with the thin, square standards and narrow handrail of the latest time that can be called Georgian (if we are to deny that name to the work of to-day), and the same character belongs to the delicate glazed dome which crowns the staircase (Fig. 280).

This house is a valuable contribution to domestic design, not only in its own right, but as marking the freedom which may justly be used in combining

280.—LANDING UNDER GLAZED DOME.

various motifs to make a new composition. There is far too much anxiety that modern houses shall be correctly in " a style," which often means that the designer limps feebly in pursuit of some historical model. What is of real importance is that a design shall have " style," which may come from a due devotion to one or other of the traditions, but may equally well evolve from a synthesis of many. That way originality may have free play, and if it is accompanied by restraint and a true sense of design, we get something which justifies modern architecture.

231.—IN THE DRAWING-ROOM.



282.—PLANS

CHAPTER XXXVI.—WOLMER WOOD, MARLOW COMMON.

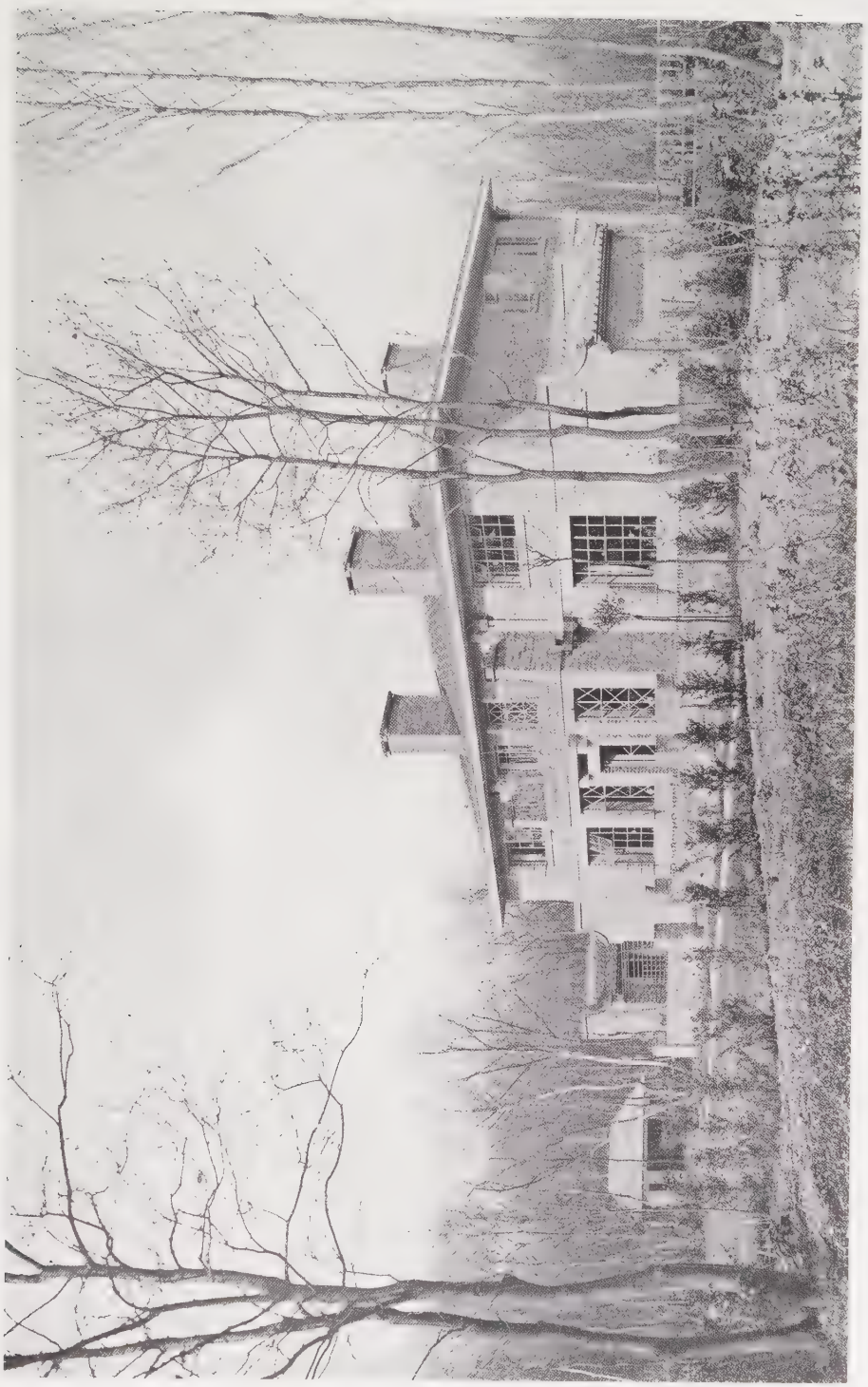
An Art Critic's House—Modern Construction—A Concrete Roof—A Lead-covered Door—Farewell to the late Captain Winter Rose, M.C.

SOME two hundred feet above the Thames, on Marlow Common, there was until lately an impenetrable wood. In a clearing made in it now stands the interesting house illustrated in this chapter. Mr. A. Lys Baldry has long been known in the world of art criticism, and it is of interest, therefore, to observe what manner of house would please him.

The late Algernon Winter Rose, like many another of the younger architects of to-day, was inclined to pick up the thread of the classical tradition at the point of its development reached about a century ago, instead of looking further back to the Age of Wren. Mr. Baldry, moreover, desired that his house should be as modern and as lasting in its building as might be; which meant, among other things, fireproof floors and roof. A concrete roof is a good example of the influence of materials on design. It would be absurd with such a construction to employ a roof of steep pitch. A roof of concrete should be flat, or nearly so. At the same time, it is not one of the most waterproof of materials unless special precautions are taken; and, for all its solidity, it is desirable to cover it with tiles.

283.—ENTRANCE FRONT FROM NORTH.

A roof of this sort is necessarily of low pitch, and this to a large extent sets the note for the rest of the building. It is soberly conceived as a simple mass of orange stock brick pleasantly relieved by some bricks of a light blue tint. Decorative features are but sparingly employed, but in Fig. 285 may be noted a balcony rail of delicate design, which came from an old house



284.—GARDEN FRONT FROM EAST.

in Chelsea and exactly suits the character of its new home. For such a building the pleasantries of iron casements with leaded lights were obviously unsuited, but Mr. Lys Baldry desired to secure the freedom from repairs which strong iron casements afford. This type of window was therefore employed, but divided by diagonal glazing bars, which give the building the flavour associated with the domestic work of Sir John Soane and his time.

On the south-east side Winter Rose devised a brick terrace with an outcrop of bastion shape opposite the garden door of the dining-room (Fig. 285). This is a good feature which gives added scale and presence

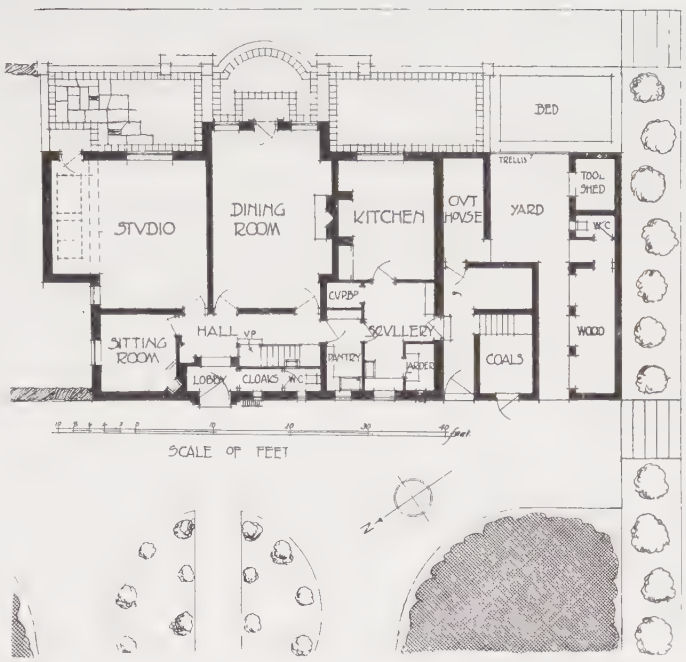
285.—TERRACE FROM SOUTH.

286.—FOOT OF STAIRCASE.

to the garden front and makes the best use of the fall of the ground. The front door is treated in an unusual way. It is of wood covered with sheet lead, another safeguard against a high cost of upkeep, for it will never need painting. But its merits are not merely practical. Lead has a texture so pleasant and its natural grey takes on in time so pretty a silvery patina that there is full æsthetic justification for this employment of the most typical of English metals.

Within the house a less austere treatment has been followed. The living-room walls are covered with rough elm panelling, and,

unfortunately, the monochrome of a photograph does not suggest how good a background it makes for cushions and hangings of a tomato red. The accompanying pictures were taken before time had allowed the garden to mature, but it is being developed both in formal fashion near the house and by making the most of the wild beauties of the enclosing wood. I cannot close this chapter without saying how great a loss architecture suffered by the death, just before the war ended, of Algernon Winter Rose. A captain in the Essex Yeomanry and wearing the Military Cross earned by



287.—GROUND FLOOR PLAN.

288.—THE DINING-ROOM.

conspicuous gallantry on the Somme, he had won through more than three years of fighting almost unscathed when he fell a victim to influenza. A man of original mind and of unstinted devotion to his art, he will long be remembered by all who, like myself, delighted to be numbered among his intimate friends.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—KERFIELD HOUSE, OLLERTON, CHESHIRE.

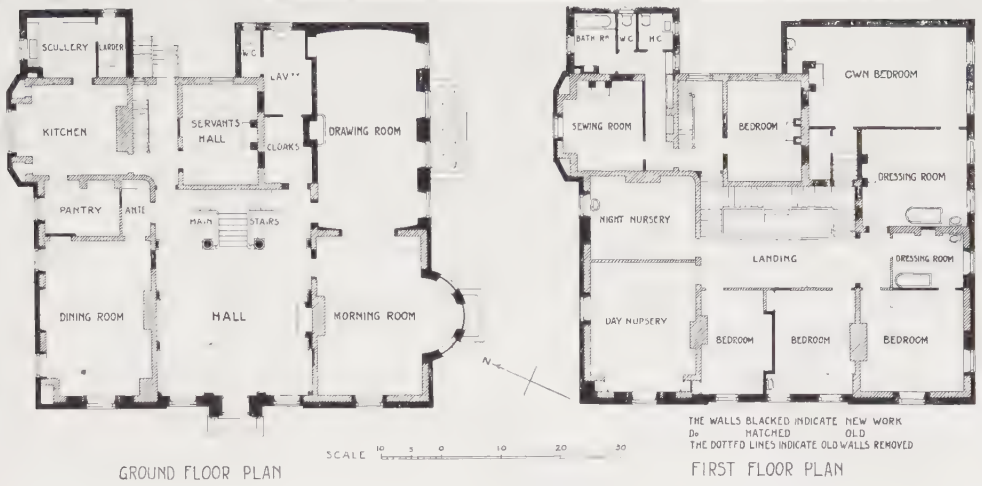
Removing a Victorian Reproach—Mr. Percy Worthington's Skill in Remodelling—Ugliness that was Skin Deep—The Morals of Alterations—Respect for Authentic Traditions.

I HAVE been guilty of a book, uniform with this, on the repair and enlargement of old houses, but Kerfield would not properly find a place in its pages. For that book's purpose was to show how the work of our forefathers should be handled, and with what faithfulness and zeal the tradition of their simple arts should be preserved. Kerfield House is an example of another kind of virtuous zeal devoted to removing all traces of an architectural manner which we have willingly seen die. The house stands or falls, therefore, as new work. After a sight of Figs. 289 and 292 no one need despair of giving comeliness to the most terrifying example of the taste of the eighteen-sixties. Mr. Percy Worthington employed a drastic surgery to the middle-aged fabric by lopping off excrescences and filling up recesses, and gave it a new youth by providing a seemly skin of 2¼in. bricks, but that was the limit of the treatment. The old body is there, and there was no rebuilding in the usual meaning of the word. Even the original roofs remain, save where projecting gables were shorn off, but they are partly masked by the new parapets. The plans (Figs. 290 and 291) show that some additions were made which enabled the arrangement of the rooms to be simplified, and the drawing-room at the south-east

289.—FROM THE SOUTH: BEFORE ALTERATION.

GROUND PLAN OF OLD HOUSE

290.—GROUND PLAN BEFORE ALTERATION.



291.—PLANS SHOWING ALTERATION.

292.—AS ALTERED AND ENLARGED.

(*Photographed from the same point as Fig.* 289.)

293.—THE HALL.

developed from this change called for the use of pillars at the north-east end of the hall, and these needful supports bring an attractive architectural element into the scheme.

The big hall provides an admirable setting for many interesting pieces of various periods. It need scarcely be added that a clean sweep was made of the Victorian taste to which the elderly (they could hardly be called old) fireplaces and decorations bore

294.—ENTRANCE FROM ROAD.

corner is wholly new. The old drawing-room became a morning-room, and the projecting bay has become round instead of rectangular. The greatest change indoors was the removal of partitions which formed the old porch, hall and study, now thrown together to make a new hall from which a new and dignified staircase now rises (Figs. 293 and 296). The structural problem which

witness, and Mr. Worthington has replaced them by elements which look back to mid-eighteenth century traditions. The general squaring-up and tidying of the form of the house was extended to the garden.

Kerfield is now approached by a straight drive from the road to the entrance door (Fig. 294), which is now in the middle of the west elevation instead of being just out of centre in the meaningless Victorian way. Fig. 297 shows the pleasant diversity made possible by the fall of the ground eastwards, which yielded a broad raised terrace running along the south front and a lower paved garden to the south-east of it. The remodelling goes to show that architectural ugliness in houses of modest size which lack prominent features is generally little more than skin deep. A skilful study of the fabric's possibilities can be made to lead, as in this case, to results rather astonishing.

295.—DRAWING-ROOM FROM MORNING-ROOM.

296.—AT FOOT OF STAIRS.

The whole question of how far we are æsthetically entitled to remodel the work of our forefathers bristles with difficulties, and none, unless he be very rash, is ready to lay

down definite rules. Half a century ago our most prominent critics were all for tricking out classical work with Gothic details. Ruskin would have liked to put pointed heads to the windows of the sober houses of Edinburgh. People "improved" such houses here and there by fitting Gothic mullions and transoms into the big openings and filling them with leaded lights, and thought they were doing Art service. Still worse, the Renaissance pulpits and screens of our churches were swept out in an orgy of mediæval fervour and replaced by spiritless Victorian replicas of Gothic forms. Opinion has swung round again, and the catchwords of the eighteenth century are minted afresh. The elder traditions are sometimes called "barbarous" by our neo-classic enthusiasts, but the most rigid of them do not propose to lay violent hands on work which is authentic in its kind. Therein lies the essential difference. We respect all old work made in a reasonable tradition, however late, and reject only those Victorian productions which were the outcome of misunderstanding both the spirit and technique of bygone days.

297.—TERRACE FROM THE EAST.

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Note.—The LARGE *numerals indicate* ILLUSTRATIONS *of the subject mentioned, and refer not to the figure numbers, but to the* PAGES *on which illustrations will be found. The* SMALL *numerals indicate* REFERENCES IN THE TEXT.

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